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THE

ILIAD

OF

HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK

BY

ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

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AN ESSAY ON THE LIFE, WRITINGS AND LEARNING OF HOMER.

THERE is ſomething in the mind of man, which goes beyond bare curioſity, and even carries us on to a ſhadow of friendſhip with thoſe great geniuſes whom we have known to excel in former ages. Nor will it appear leſs to any one, who conſiders how much it partakes of the nature of friendſhip; how it compounds itſelf of an admiration raiſed by what we meet with concerning them; a tendency to be further acquainted with them, by gathering every circumſtance of their lives; a kind of complacency in their company, when we retire to enjoy what they have left; an union with them in thoſe ſentiments they approve; and an endeavour to defend them, when we think they are injuriouſly attacked, or even ſometimes with too partial an affection.

There is alſo in mankind a ſpirit of envy or oppoſition, which makes them uneaſy to ſee others of the ſame ſpecies ſeated far above them in a ſort of perfec-

tion. And this, at leaſt ſo far as regards the fame of writers, has not always been known to die with a man but to purſue his remains with idle traditions, and weak conjectures; ſo that his name, which is not to be forgotten, ſhall be preſerv'd only to be ſtained and blotted, The controverſy, which was carried on between the author and his enemies while he was living, ſhall ſtill be kept on foot; not entirely upon his own account, but on theirs who live after him; ſome being fond to praiſe extravagantly, and others as raſhly eager to contradict his admirers. This proceeding, on both ſides, gives us an image of the firſt deſcriptions of war, ſuch as the Iliad affords; where a hero diſputes the field with an army till it is his time to die, and then the battle which we expected to fall of courſe, is renewed about the body; his friends contending that they may embalm and honour it, his enemies that they may caſt it to the dogs and vultures.

There are yet others of a low kind of taſte, who, without any malignity to the character of a great author, leſſen the dignity of their ſubject by inſiſting too meanly upon little particularities. They imagine it the part of an hiſtorian to omit nothing they meet with, concerning him; and gather every thing without any diſtinction, to the prejudice or neglect of the more noble parts of his character; like thoſe trifling painters, or ſculptors, who beſtow infinite pains and patience upon the moſt inſignificant parts of a figure, till they ſink the grundeur of the whole, by finiſhing every thing with the neateſt want of judgement.

Beſides theſe, there is a fourth ſort of men, who pretend to diveſt themſelves of partiality on both ſides, and to get above that imperfect idea of their ſubject, which little writers fall into; who propoſe to themſelves a calm ſearch after truth, and a rational adherence to probability in their hiſtorical collections: who neither wiſh to be led into the fables of ſuperſtition, nor are willing to ſupport the injuſtice of a malignant criticiſm; but, endeavouring to ſteer in a middle way, have obtained a character of failing leaſt in the choice of materials for hiſtory, though drawn from the darkeſt ages.

Being

Being therefore to write ſomething concerning a life, which there is little proſpect of our knowing after it has been the fruitleſs inquiry of ſo many ages, and which has however been thus differently treated by hiſtorians, I ſhall endeavour to ſpeak of it not as a certainty, but as the tradition, opinion, or collection of authors, who have been ſuppoſed to write of Homer in theſe four preceding methods; to which we alſo ſhall add ſome further conjectures of our own. After his life has been thus rather invented than written, I ſhall conſider him hiſtorically as an author, with regard to thoſe works which he has left behind him: in doing which, we may trace the degrees of eſteem they have obtained in different periods of time, and regulate our preſent opinion of them by a view of that age in which they were writ.

I. If we take a view of Homer in thoſe fabulous traditions which the admiration of the ancient heathens has occaſioned, we find them running to ſuperſtition, and multiplied, and contradictory to one another, in the different accounts which are given with reſpect to Egypt and Greece, the two native countries of fable. We have one in * Euſtathius moſt ſtrangely framed, which Alexander Paphius has reported concerning Homer's birth and infancy. That "he was "born in Egypt of Damaſagoras and Ethra, and "brought up by a daughter of Orus, the prieſt of "Iſis, who was herſelf a propheteſs, and from whoſe "breaſts drops of honey would frequently diſtil into "the mouth of the infant. In the night-time the "firſt ſounds he uttered were the notes of nine ſeveral "birds; in the morning he was found playing with "nine doves in the bed: the Sybil, who attended "him, uſed to be ſeized with a poetical fury, and "utter verſes, in which ſhe commanded Damaſago-"ras to build a temple to the Muſes: This he per-"formed in obedience to her inſpiration, and related "all theſe things to the child when he was grown

I. *Stories of Homer which are the effects of extravagant admiration.*

* Euſtathius in Od. 12.

" up; who, in memory of the doves which played " with him during his infancy, has in his works pre- " ferred this bird to the honour of bringing Ambroſia " to Jupiter."

One would think a ſtory of this nature ſo fit for age to talk of, and infancy to hear, were incapable of being handed down to us. But we find the tradition again taken up to be heightened in one part, and carried forward in another. * Heliodorus, who had heard of this claim which Egypt put in for Homer, endeavours to ſtrengthen it by naming Thebes for the particular place of his birth. He allows too, that a prieſt was his reputed father, but that his real father, according to the opinion of Egypt, was Mercury: he ſays, " That when the prieſt was celebrating the rites " of his country, and therefore ſlept with his wife in " the temple, the god had knowledge of her, and " begot Homer: that he was born with tufts of hair " in his † thigh, as a ſign of unlawful generation, " from whence he was called Homer by the nations " through which he wandered: that he himſelf was the " occaſion why this ſtory of his divine extraction is un- " known; becauſe he neither told his name, race, nor " country, being aſhamed of his exile, to which his " reputed father drove him from among the conſecrat- " ed youths, on accouut of that mark which their " prieſts eſteemed a teſtimony of an inceſtuous birth."

Theſe are the extravagant ſtories by which men, who have not been able to expreſs how much they admire him, tranſcend the bounds of probability to ſay ſomething extraordinary. The mind that becomes dazzled with the ſight of his performances, loſes the common idea of a man in the fancied ſplendor of perfection: it ſees nothing leſs than a god worthy to be his father, nothing leſs than a propheteſs deſerving to be his nurſe; and, growing unwilling that he ſhould be ſpoken of in a language beneath its imaginations, delivers fables in the place of hiſtory.

But whatever has thus been offered to ſupport the claim of Egypt, they who plead for Greece are not to

* Heliod. Ethiop. l. 3. † Ὀμηρὸς, Femur.

be

be accuſed for coming ſhort of it. Their fancy roſe with a refinement as much above that of their maſters, as the Greek imagination was ſuperior to that of the Egyptians: their fiction was but a veil, and frequently wrought fine enough to be ſeen through, ſo that it hardly hides the meaning it is made to cover, from the firſt glance of the imagination. For a proof of this, we mention that poetical genealogy which is deliver'd for Homer's, in the * Greek treatiſe of the contention between him and Heſiod, and but little varied by the relation of it in Suidas.

"The poet Linus, ſay they, was born of Apollo, "and Thooſe the daughter of Neptune. Pierus of "Linus: Oeagrus of king Pierus and the nymph "Methone: Orpheus of Oeagrus and the muſe Cal"liope. From Orpheus came Othrys; from him Har"monides; from him Philoterpus; from him Eu"phemus; from him Epiphrades, who begot Mene"lops, the father of Dius; Dius had Heſiod the "poet and Perſes by Pucamede, the daughter of A"pollo; then Perſes had Mæon, on whoſe daughter "Crytheis, the river Meles, begot Homer."

Here we behold a wonderful genealogy, contrived induſtriouſly to raiſe our idea to the higheſt, where gods, goddeſſes, muſes, kings and poets link in a deſcent; nay, where poets are made to depend, as it were, in cluſters upon the ſame ſtalk beneath one another. If we conſider too that Harmonides is derived from harmony, Philoterpus from love of delight, Euphemus from beautiful diction, Epiphrades from intelligence, and Pucamede from prudence; it may not be improbable, but the inventors meant, by a fiction of this nature, to turn ſuch qualifications into perſons, as were agreeable to his character for whom the line was drawn; ſo that every thing divine or great, will thus come together by the extravagant indulgence of fancy, while admiration turns itſelf in ſome to bare fable, in others to allegory.

After this fabulous tree of his pedigree, we may regularly view him in one paſſage concerning his

* Ἀγὼν Ὁμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου.

birth, which, though it differs in circumſtance, from what has been here delivered, yet carries on the ſame air, and regards the ſame traditions. There is a ſhort life of Homer attributed to Plutarch, wherein a third part of Ariſtotle on poetry, which is now loſt, is quoted for an account of his uncommon birth in this manner. "At the time when Neleus, the ſon of "Codrus, led the colony which was ſent into Ionia, "there was in the iſland of Io a young girl, compreſ- "ſed by a genius, who delighted to aſſociate with "the Muſes, and ſhare in their conſorts. She, find- "ing herſelf with child, and being touched with the "ſhame of what had happened to her, removed from "thence to a place called Egina. There ſhe was ta- "ken in an excurſion made by robbers, and being "brought to Smyrna, which was then under the Ly- "dians, they give her to Mæon the king, who mar- "ried her upon account of her beauty. But while "ſhe walked on the bank of the river Meles, ſhe "brought forth Homer, and expired. The infant "was taken by Mæon, and bred up as his ſon, till "the death of that prince." And from this point of the ſtory the poet is let down into his traditional poverty. Here we ſee, though he be taken out of the lineage of Meles, where we met him before, he has ſtill as wonderful a riſe invented for him; he is ſtill to ſpring from a demi-god, one who was of a poetical diſpoſition, from whom he might inherit a ſoul turned to poetry, and received an aſſiſtance of heavenly inſpiration.

In this life the moſt general tradition concerning him is his blindneſs; yet there are ſome who will not allow even this to have happened after the manner in which it falls upon other men: chance and ſickneſs are excluded; nothing leſs than gods and heroes muſt be viſibly concerned about him. Thus we find among the different accounts which * Hermias has collected concerning his blindneſs, that when Homer reſolved to write of Achilles, he had an exceeding deſire to fill his mind with a juſt idea of ſo glorious a hero: wherefore, having paid all due honours at his tomb,

* Hermias in Phæd. Plat. Leo Allat. de Patr. Hom. c. 10.

he

he intreats that he may obtain a ſight of him. The hero grants his poet's petition, and riſes in a glorious ſuit of armour, which caſt ſo unſufferable a ſplendor, that Homer loſt his eyes, while he gazed for the inlargement of his notions.

If this be any thing more than a mere fable, one would be apt to imagine it inſinuated his contracting a blindneſs by too intenſe an application while he wrote his Iliad. But it is a very pompous way of letting us into the knowledge of ſo ſhort a truth: it looks as if men imagined the lives of poets ſhould be poetically written; that to ſpeak plainly of them, were to ſpeak contemptibly; or that we debaſe them, when they are placed in leſs glorious company than thoſe exalted ſpirits which they themſelves have been fond to celebrate. We may however in ſome meaſure be reconciled to this laſt idle fable, for having occaſioned ſo beautiful an epiſode in the Ambra of Politian. That which does not inform us in a hiſtory, may pleaſe us in its proper ſphere of poetry.

II. Such ſtories as theſe have been the effects of a ſuperſtitious fondneſs, and of the aſtoniſhment of men at what they conſider in a view of perfection. But neither have all the ſame taſte, nor do they equally ſubmit to the ſuperiority of others, nor bear that human nature, which they know to be imperfect, ſhould be praiſed in an extreme without oppoſition. From ſome principles of this kind have ariſen a ſecond ſort of ſtories, which glance at Homer with malignant ſuppoſitions, and endeavour to throw a diminiſhing air over his life, as a kind of anſwer to thoſe who ſought to aggrandize him injudiciouſly.

II. *Stories of Homer proceeding from envy.*

Under this head we may reckon thoſe ungrounded conjectures with which his adverſaries aſperſe the very deſign and proſecution of his travels, when they inſinuate, that they were one continued ſearch after authors who had written before him, and particularly upon the ſame ſubject, in order to deſtroy them, or to rob them of their inventions.

Thus we read in * Diodorus Siculus, "That there

* Diod. Sic. l. 4.

"was

" was one Daphne the daughter of Tireſias, who from " her inſpirations obtained the title of a Sibyl. She " had a very extraordinary genius, and being made " prieſteſs at Delphos, wrote oracles with wonderful " elegance, which Homer ſought for, and adorned " his poems with ſeveral of her verſes." But ſhe is placed ſo far in the fabulous age of the world, that nothing can be averred of her: and as for the verſes now aſcribed to the Sibyls, they are more modern than to be able to confirm the ſtory; which, as it is univerſally aſſented to, diſcovers that whatever there is in them in common with Homer, the compilers have rather taken from him; perhaps to ſtrengthen the authority of their work by the protection of this tradition.

The next inſinuation we hear is from Suidas, that Palamedes, who fought at Troy, was famous for poetry, and wrote concerning that war in the Doric letter which he invented, probably much againſt Agamemnon and Ulyſſes, his mortal enemies. Upon this account ſome have fancied his works were ſuppreſſed by Agamemnon's poſterity, or that their intire deſtruction was contrived and effected by Homer when he undertook the ſame ſubject. But ſurely the works of ſo conſiderable a man, when they had been able to bear up ſo long a time as that which paſſed between the ſiege of Troy, and the flouriſhing of Homer, muſt have been too much diſperſed, for one of ſo mean a condition as he is repreſented, to have deſtroyed in every place, though he had been never ſo much aſſiſted by the vigilant temper of envy. And we may ſay too, that what might have been capable of raiſing this principle in him, muſt be capable of being in ſome meaſure eſteemed by others, and of having at leaſt one line of it preſerved to us as his.

After him, in the order of time, we meet with a whole ſet of names, to whom the malignants of Homer would have him obliged, without being able to prove their aſſertion. Suidas mentions Corinnus Ilienſis, the ſecretary of Palamedes, who writ a poem upon the ſame ſubject, but no one is produced as having ſeen it. * Tzetzes mentions (and from Johannes Melala only,)

* Tzetzes Chil. 5 Hiſt. 29.

Siſyphus

Siſyphus the Coan, ſecretary of Teucer, but it is not ſo much as known if he writ verſe or proſe. Beſides theſe, are Dictys the Cretan, ſecretary to Idomeneus, and Dares the Phrygian, an attendant of Hector, who have ſpurious treatiſes paſſing under their names. From each of theſe is Homer ſaid to have borrowed his whole argument; ſo inconſiſtent are theſe ſtories with one another!

The next names we find, are Demodocus, whom Homer might have met at Corcyra, and Phemius, whom he might have met at Ithaca: the one (as * Plutarch ſays) having according to tradition written the war of Troy, the other the *return* of the Grecian captain. But theſe are only two names of friends, which he is pleaſed to honour with eternity in his poem, or two different pictures of himſelf, as author of the Iliad and Odyſſes, or entirely the children of his imagination, without any particular alluſion. So that his uſage here puts me in mind of his own Vulcan in the † Iliad: The God had caſt two ſtatues, which he endued with the power of motion; and it is ſaid preſently after, that he is ſcarce able to go unleſs they ſupport him.

It is reported by ſome, ſays ‡ Ptolemæus Ephæſtio, "That there was, before Homer, a woman of Memphis, called Phantaſia, who writ of the wars of Troy, and the wanderings of Ulyſſes. Now Homer arriving at Memphis where ſhe had laid up her works, and getting acquainted with Phanitas, whoſe buſineſs it was to copy the ſacred writings, he obtained a ſight of theſe, and followed entirely the ſcheme ſhe had drawn." But this is a wild ſtory, which ſpeaks of an Egyptian woman with a Greek name, and who never was heard of but upon this account. It appears indeed from his knowledge of the Egyptian learning, that he was initiated into their myſteries, and for aught we know by one Phanitas. But if we conſider what the name of the woman ſignifies, it ſeems only as if from being uſed in a figurative expreſſion, it had been miſtaken afterwards for a pro-

* Plutarch on Muſic. † Iliad 18.

‡ Ptol. Ep. Excerpt. apud Photium, l. 5.

per

per name. And then the meaning will be, that having gathered as much information concerning the Grecian and Trojan ſtory, as he could be furniſhed with from the accounts of Egypt, which were generally mixed with fancy and fable, he wrought out his plans of the Iliad and the Odyſſes.

We paſs all theſe ſtories, together with the little Iliad of Siagrus, mentioned by * Ælian But one cannot leave this ſubject without reflecting on the depreciating humour, and odd induſtry of man, which ſhews itſelf in raiſing ſuch a number of inſinuations that claſh with each other, and in ſpiriting up ſuch a croud of unwarranted names to ſupport them. Nor can we but admire at the contradictory nature of this proceeding; that names of works, which either never were in being, or never worthy to live, ſhould be produced only to perſuade us that the moſt laſting and beautiful poem of the ancients was taken out of them. A beggar might be content to patch up a garment with ſuch ſhreds as the world throws away, but it is never to be imagined an emperor would make his robes of them.

After Homer had ſpent a conſiderable time in travel, we find him towards his age introduced to ſuch an action as tends to his diſparagement. It is not enough to accuſe him for ſpoiling the dead, they raiſe a living author, by whom he muſt be baffled in that qualification on which his fame is founded.

There is in † Heſiod an account of an ancient poetical contention at the funeral of Amphidamus, in which, he ſays, he obtained the prize, but does not mention from whom he carried it. There is alſo among the ‡ Hymns aſcribed to Homer, a prayer to Venus for ſucceſs in a poetical diſpute, but it neither mentions where, nor againſt whom. But though they have neglected to name their antagoniſts, others have ſince taken care to fill up the ſtories by putting them together. The making two ſuch conſiderable names in poetry engage, carries an amuſing pomp in it, like making two heroes of the firſt rank enter the liſts of

* Ælian. l. 14. c. 21. † Heſiod. Op. et dierum, l. 2. v. 272. etc. ‡ Hom. Hymn. 2. ad Venerem.

combat

combat. And if Homer and Heſiod had their parties among the Grammarians, here was an excellent opportunity for Heſiod's favourers to make a ſacrifice of Homer. Hence a bare conjecture might ſpread into a *tradition*, then the tradition give occaſion to an *epigram*, which is yet extant, and again the *epigram* (for want of knowing the time it was writ in) be alleged as a *proof* of that conjecture from whence it ſprung. After this a * whole treatiſe was written upon it, which appears not very ancient, becauſe it mentions Adrian: The ſtory agrees in the main with the ſhort account we find in † Plutarch, "That Ganictor, the ſon of "Amphidamus, king of Eubœa, being uſed to cele- "brate his father's funeral games, invited from all "parts men famous for ſtrength and wiſdom. Among "theſe Homer and Heſiod arrived at Chalcis. The "king Panidas preſided over the conteſt, which being "finiſhed, he decreed the Tripos to Heſiod, with this "ſentence, That the poet of peace and huſbandry "better deſerved to be crowned, than the poet of war "and contention. Whereupon Heſiod dedicated the "prize to the Muſes, with this inſcription,

"Ἡσίοδος Μούσαις Ἑλικωνίσι τὸν δ' ἀνέθηκεν,
"Ὕμνῳ νικήσας ἐν Καλχίδι θεῖον Ὅμηρον.

Which are two lines taken from that place in Heſiod, where he mentions no antagoniſt, and altered, that the two names might be brought in, as is evident by comparing them with theſe,

"Ὕμνῳ νικήσαντα φέρειν τρίποδ' ἀτώσιντα,
"Τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ Μούσης Ἑλικωνιάδεσσ' ἀνέθηκα.

To anſwer this ſtory, we may take notice that Heſiod is generally placed after Homer. Grævius, his own commentator, ſets him a hundred years lower; and whether he were ſo or no, yet † Plutarch has ſlightly paſſed the whole account as a fable. Nay, we may draw an argument againſt it from Heſiod himſelf: He had a love of Fame, which cauſed him to

* Ἀγὼν Ὁμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου.
† Plut. Banquet of the ſeven wiſe men. ‡ Plut. Symp. l. 5. § 2.

engage

engage at the funeral games, and which went ſo far as to make him record his conqueſt in his own works; had he defeated Homer, the ſame principle would have made him mention a name that could have ſecured his own to immortality. A poet, who records his glory, would not omit the nobleſt circumſtance, and Homer, like a captive prince, had certainly graced the triumph of his adverſary.

Towards the latter end of his life, there is another ſtory invented, which makes him conclude it in a manner altogether beneath the greatneſs of a genius. We find in the life, ſaid to be written by Plutarch, a tradition, "That he was warned by an oracle to beware of the *young mens riddle*. This remained long obſcure to him, till he arrived at the iſland Io. There, as he ſat to behold the fiſhermen, they propoſed to him a riddle in verſe, which he being unable to anſwer, died for grief." This ſtory refutes itſelf, by carrying ſuperſtition at one end, and folly at the other. It ſeems conceived with an air of deriſion, to lay a great man in the duſt after a fooliſh manner. The ſame ſort of hand might have framed that tale of Ariſtotle's drowning himſelf becauſe he could not account for the Euripus: the deſign is the ſame, the turn the ſame; and all the difference, that the great men are each to ſuffer in his character, the one by a *poetical riddle*, the other by a *philoſophical problem*. But theſe are accidents which can only ariſe from the meanneſs of pride, or extravagance of madneſs: A ſoul enlarged with knowledge (ſo vaſtly as that of Homer) better knows the proper ſtreſs which is to be laid upon every incident, and the proportion of concern, or careleſſneſs with which it ought to be affected. But it is the fate of narrow capacities to meaſure mankind by a falſe ſtandard, and imagine the great, like themſelves, capable of being diſconcerted by little occaſions; to frame their malignant fables according to this imagination, and to ſtand detected by it as by an evident mark of ignorance.

III. *Stories of Homer proceeding from trifling curioſity.*

III. The third manner in which the life of Homer has been written, is but an amaſſing of all the tradition

tions and hints which the writers could meet with, great or little, in order to tell a ſtory of him to the world. Perhaps the want of choice materials might put them upon the neceſſity; or perhaps an injudicious deſire of ſaying all they could, occaſioned the fault. However it be, a life compoſed of trivial circumſtances, which (though it give a true account of ſeveral paſſages) ſhews a man but little in that light in which he was moſt famous, and has hardly any thing correſpondent to the idea we entertain of him; ſuch a life, I ſay, will never anſwer rightly the demand the world has upon an hiſtorian. Yet the moſt formal account we have of Homer is of this nature, I mean that which is ſaid to be collected by Herodotus. It is, in ſhort, an unſupported minute treatiſe, compoſed of events which lie within the compaſs of probability, and belong to the loweſt ſphere of life. It ſeems to be entirely conducted by the ſpirit of a grammarian; ever abounding with *extempore verſes*, as if it were to prove a thing ſo unqueſtionable as our author's title to rapture; and at the ſame time the occaſions are ſo poorly invented, that they miſbecome the warmth of a poetical imagination. There is nothing in it above the life which a grammarian might lead himſelf; nay, it is but ſuch a one as they commonly do lead, the higheſt ſtage of which is to be *maſter of a ſchool*. But becauſe this is a treatiſe to which writers have had recourſe for want of a better. I ſhall give the following abſtract of it.

Homer was born at Smyrna, about one hundred ſixty-eight years after the ſiege of Troy, and ſix hundred twenty-two years before the expedition of Xerxes. His mother's name was Crytheis, who proving unlawfully with child, was ſent away from Cumæ by her uncle, with Iſmenias, one of thoſe who led the colony of Smyrna, then building. A while after, as ſhe was celebrating a feſtival with other women on the banks of the river Meles, ſhe was delivered of Homer, whom ſhe therefore named Meleſigenes. Upon this ſhe left Iſmenias, and ſupported herſelf by her labour, till Phemius (who taught a ſchool in Smyrna) fell in love with her, and married her. But both dying in proceſs of time, the ſchool fell to Homer, who managed

it with ſuch wiſdom, that he was univerſally admired both by natives and ſtrangers. Amongſt theſe latter was Mentes, a maſter of a ſhip from Leucadia, by whoſe perſuaſions and promiſes he gave up his ſchool, and went to travel: with him he viſited Spain and Italy, but was left behind at Ithaca upon account of a defluxion in his eyes. During his ſtay, he was entertained by one Mentor, a man of fortune, juſtice, and hoſpitality, and learned the principal incidents of Ulyſſes's life. But at the return of Mentes, he went from thence to Colophon, where, his defluxion renewing, he fell entirely blind. Upon this he could think of no better expedient than to go back to Smyrna, where perhaps he might be ſupported by thoſe who knew him, and have the leiſure to addict himſelf to poetry. But there he found his poverty increaſe, and his hopes of encouragement fail; ſo that he removed to Cumæ, and by the way was entertained for ſome time at the houſe of one Tychius a leather-dreſſer. At Cumæ his poems were wonderfully admired, but when he propoſed to eternize their town if they would allow him a ſalary, he was anſwered, that there would be no end of maintaining all the Ὁμηροι, or *blind men*, and hence he got the name of Homer. From Cumæ he went to Phocæa, where one Theſtorides (a ſchoolmaſter alſo) offered to maintain him if he would ſuffer him to tranſcribe his verſes: this Homer complying with through mere neceſſity, the other had no ſooner gotten them but he removed to Chios; there the poems gained him wealth and honour, while the author himſelf hardly earned his bread by repeating them. At laſt, ſome who came from Chios having told the people that the ſame verſes were publiſhed there by a ſchoolmaſter, Homer reſolved to find him out. Having therefore landed near that place, he was received by one Glaucus a ſhepherd, (at whoſe door he had like to have been worried by dogs) and carried by him to his maſter at Bolliſſus, who, admiring his knowledge, intruſted him with the education of his children. Here his praiſe began to ſpread, and Theſtorides, who heard of his neighbourhood, fled before him. He removed however ſome time afterwards

to

to Chios, where he ſet up a ſchool of poetry, gained a competent fortune, married a wife, and had two daughters, the one of which died young, the other was married to his patron at Bolliſſus. Here he inſerted in his poems the names of thoſe to whom he had been moſt obliged, as Mentes, Phemius, Mentor, and Tychius; and reſolving for Athens, he made honourable mention of that city, to prepare the Athenians for a kind reception. But as he went, the ſhip put in at Samos, where he continued the whole winter, ſinging at the houſes of great men, with a train of boys after him. In Spring he went on board again in order to proſecute his journey to Athens, but landing by the way at Ios, he fell ſick, died, and was buried on the ſea-ſhore.

This is the life of Homer aſcribed to Herodotus; though it is wonderful it ſhould be ſo, ſince it evidently contradicts his own hiſtory, by placing Homer ſix hundred twenty-two years before the expedition of Xerxes; whereas Herodotus himſelf, who was alive at the time of that expedition, ſays, Homer was only * four hundred years before him. However, if we can imagine that there may be any thing of truth in the main parts of this treatiſe, we may gather theſe general obſervations from it: That he ſhewed a great thirſt after knowledge, by undertaking ſuch long and numerous travels: That he manifeſted an unexampled vigour of mind, by being able to write with more fire under the diſadvantages of blindneſs, and the utmoſt poverty, than any poet after him in better circumſtances; and that he had an unlimited ſenſe of fame, (the attendant of noble ſpirits) which prompted him to engage in new travels, both under theſe diſadvantages, and the additional burden of old age.

But it will not perhaps be either improper or difficult to make ſome conjectures, which ſeem to lay open the foundation from whence the traditions which frame the low lives of Homer have riſen. We may conſider, that there are no hiſtorians of his time, (or none handed down to us) who have mentioned him; and that

* Herod. l. 2.

he has never ſpoken plainly of himſelf, in thoſe works which have been aſcribed to him without controverſy. However, an eager deſire to know ſomething concerning him has occaſioned mankind to labour the point under theſe diſadvantages, and turn on all hands to ſee if there were any thing left which might have the leaſt appearance of information. Upon the ſearch, they find no remains but his *name* and *works*, and reſolve to torture theſe upon the rack of invention, in order to give ſome account of the perſon they belong to.

The firſt thing therefore they ſettle is, That what paſſed for his *name* muſt be his *name* no longer, but an *additional title* uſed inſtead of it. The reaſon why it was given, muſt be ſome accident of his life. They then proceed to conſider every thing that the word may imply by its derivation. One finds that Ὁ μηρὸς ſignifies *a thigh*; whence ariſes the tradition in * Heliodorus, that he was baniſhed Egypt for the mark on that part, which ſhewed a ſpurious birth; and this they imagine ground enough to give him the life of a wanderer. A ſecond finds, that Ὁμηρος ſignifies an *hoſtage*, and then he muſt be delivered as ſuch in a war (according to † Proclus) between Smyrna and Chios. A third can derive the name Ὁ μὴ ὁρῶν, *non videns*, from whence he muſt be a *blind man* (as in the place aſcribed to ‡ Herodotus). A fourth brings it from Ὁμοῦ ἰέναι, *ſpeaking in council*; and then (as it is in Suidas) he muſt, by a divine inſpiration, declare to the Smyrnæans, that they ſhould war againſt Colophon. A fifth finds the word may be brought to ſignify *following others*, or *joining himſelf* to them, and then he muſt be called Homer for ſaying, (as it is quoted from ‖ Ariſtotle, in the life aſcribed to Plutarch) that he would Ὁμηρεῖν, or *follow* the Lydians from Smyrna. Thus has the name been turned and winded, enough at leaſt to give a ſuſpicion, that he who got a *new etymology*, got either a *new life* of him, or ſomething which he added to the old one.

* Hel. l. 3. † Proc. vit. Hom. ‡ Herod. vit. Hom. ‖ Plut. vit. Hom.

However,

However, the *name* itſelf not affording enough to furniſh out a whole life, his *works* muſt be brought in for aſſiſtance, and it is taken for granted, that where he has not ſpoken of himſelf, he lies veiled beneath the perſons or actions of thoſe whom he deſcribes. Becauſe he calls a poet by the name of *Phemius* in his Odyſſey, they conclude this * Phemius was his maſter. Becauſe he ſpeaks of Demodocus as another poet who was blind, and frequented palaces; he muſt be ſent about † blind, to ſing at the doors of rich men. If Ulyſſes be ſet upon by dogs at his ſhepherd's cottage, becauſe this is a low adventure, it is thought to be his own at Bolliſſus ‡. And if he calls the leather-dreſſer, who made Ajax's ſhield, by the name of Tychius, he muſt have been ſupported by ſuch an one in his wants: Nay, ſome have been ſo violently carried into this way of conjecturing, that the bare ‖ *ſimile* of a woman who works hard for her livelihood, is ſaid to have been borrowed from his mother's condition, and brought as a proof of it. Thus he is ſtill imagined to intend himſelf; and the fictions of poetry, converted into real facts, are delivered for his life, who has aſſigned them to others. All thoſe ſtories in his works which ſuit with a mean condition, are ſuppoſed to have happened to him; though the ſame way of inference might as well prove him to have acted in a higher ſphere, from the many paſſages that ſhew his ſkill in government, and his knowledge of the great parts of life.

There are ſome other ſcattered ſtories of Homer which fall not under theſe heads, but are however of as trifling a nature; as much unfit for the materials of hiſtory, ſtill more ungrounded, if poſſible, and ariſing merely from chance, or the humours of men: Such is the report we meet with from § Heraclides, that "Homer was fined at Athens for a madman;" which ſeems invented by the diſciples of Socrates, to caſt an odium upon the Athenians for their conſenting to the death of their maſter, and carries in it ſomething like a declaiming revenge of the ſchools, as if the world

* Her d. vit. Hom. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. ‖ Vid. M. Dacier's life of Homer. § Diogenes Laertius ex Hermel. in vita Socratis.

ſhould imagine the one could be eſteemed *mad*, where the other was put to death for being *wicked*. Such another report is that in * Ælian, "That Homer por-"tioned his daughter with ſome of his works for want "of money;" which looks but like a jeſt upon a poor wit, which at firſt might have had an Epigrammatiſt for its father, and been afterwards gravely underſtood by ſome painful collector. In ſhort, mankind have laboured heartily about him to no purpoſe; they have caught up every thing greedily, with that buſy minute curioſity and unſatisfactory inquiſitiveneſs, which Seneca calls the *Diſeaſe of the Greeks*; they have puzzled the cauſe by their attempts to find it out; and, like travellers deſtitute of a road, yet reſolved to make one over unpaſſable deſerts, they ſuperinduce error, inſtead of removing ignorance.

IV. *Probable conjectures concerning Homer.*

IV. Whenever any authors have attempted to write the life of Homer, clear from ſuperſtition, envy, and trifling, they have grown aſhamed of all theſe traditions. This, however, has not occaſioned them to deſiſt from the undertaking; but ſtill the difficulty which could not make them deſiſt, has neceſſitated them, either to deliver the old ſtory with excuſes, or elſe, inſtead of a life, to compoſe a treatiſe partly of *criticiſm*, and partly of *character* rather deſcriptive, than ſupported by action, and the air of hiſtory.

His Time. They begin with acquainting us, that the *Time* in which he lived has never been fixed beyond diſpute, and that the opinions of authors are various concerning it: but the controverſy, in its ſeveral conjectures, includes a ſpace of years between the earlieſt and lateſt, from twenty-four to about five hundred, after the ſiege of Troy. Whenever the time was, it ſeems not to have been near that ſiege, from his own † *Invocation* of the *Muſes* to recount the catalogue of the ſhips: "For we, ſays he, have only "heard a rumour, and know nothing particular."

* Ælian. l. 9. cap. 15.

† Ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἷον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν. Iliad 2. v. 487.

It

It is remarked by ‡ Velleius Paterculus, That it must have been considerably later, from his own confession, that "mankind was but half as strong in his age, as "in that he writ of;" which, as it is founded upon a notion of a gradual degeneracy in our nature, discovers the interval to have been long between Homer and his subject. But not to trouble ourselves with entering into all the dry dispute, we may take notice, that the world is inclined to stand by the † Arundelian *marble*, as the most certain computation of those early times; and this, by placing him at the time when Diogenetus ruled in Athens, makes him flourish a little before the Olympiads were established; about three hundred years after the taking of Troy, and near a thousand before the Christian Æra. For a farther confirmation of this, we have some great names of antiquity, who give him a cotemporary agreeing with the computation: ‡ Cicero says, There was a tradition that Homer lived about the time of Lycurgus. ‖ Strabo tells us, It was reported that Lycurgus went to Chios for an interview with him. And even § Plutarch, when he says, Lycurgus received Homer's works from the grandson of that Creophilus with whom he had lived, does not put him so far backward, but that possibly they might have been alive at the same time.

The next dispute regards his *country*, concerning which ⸸ Adrian inquired of the Gods,
as a question not to be settled by men: *His Country.*
And Appion (according to * Pliny,)
raised a spirit for his information. That which has increased the difficulty, is the number of contesting places, of which Suidas has reckoned up nineteen in

‡ Hic longe a temporibus belli quod composuit, Troici, quam quidam rentur, abfuit. Nam ferme ante annos 950 floruit, intra mille natus est: quo nomine non est mirandum quod sæpe illud usurpat, εἰσὶ νῦν Βροτοί εἰσι. Hoc enim ut *hominum* ita *sæculorum* notatur differentia. Vell. Paterc. lib. 1.

† Vide Dacier, Du Pin. &c, *concerning* the Arundelian marble.

‡ Cicero Qu. Tuscul. l. 5. ‖ Strabo l. 10 § Plut. vita Lycurgi. ⸸ Ἀγών Ὁμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου, *of Adrian's Oracle.* * Plin. l. 30. cap. 2.

one

one breath. But his ancient commentator, * Didymus, found the ſubject ſo fertile, as to employ a great part of his four thouſand volumes upon it. There is a propheſy of the Sybils, that he ſhould be born at Salamis in Cyprus; and then to play an argument of the ſame nature againſt it, there is the *oracle* given to Adrian afterwards, that ſays he was born in Ithaca. There are *cuſtoms* of Æolia and Egypt cited from his works, to make out by turns and with the ſame probability, that he belonged to each of them. There was a ſchool ſhewed for his at Colophon, and a tomb at Io, both of equal ſtrength to prove he had his birth in either. As for the Athenians, they challenged him as born where they had a colony; or elſe in behalf of Greece in general, and as the *metropolis* of its learning, they made his name free of their city (*qu. Licinia et Mutia lege*, ſays † Politian) after the manner of that law by which all Italy became free of Rome. All theſe have their authors to record their titles, but ſtill the weight of the queſtion ſeems to lie between Smyrna and Chios, which we muſt therefore take a little more notice of. That Homer was born at Smyrna, is endeavoured to be proved by an ‡ epigram, recorded to have been under the ſtatue of Piſiſtratus at Athens; by the reports mentioned in Cicero, Strabo, and A. Gellius; and by the Greek lives, which paſs under the names of Herodotus, Plutarch, and Proclus; as alſo the two that are anonymous. The ** Smyrnæans built a temple to him, caſt medals of him, and grew ſo poſſeſt of his having been theirs, that it is ſaid they burned Zoilus for affronting them in the perſon of Homer. On the other hand, the Chians plead the ancient authorities of †† Simonides and ‖ Theocritus for his being born among them.

* Seneca. Ep. 88. concerning Didymus. † Politian. Præf. in Homerum. ‡ Epigram on Piſiſtratus *in the anonymous life before Homer.*. ** Vitruvius Prooem. l. 7. †† Simonides Frag. de brevitate vitæ, *quoting a verſe of Homer*,

Ἐν δὲ τὸ κάλλιστον Χίος ἔειπεν ἀνήρ.

‖ Theocritus in Dioſcuris, ad fin.

——————————Χῖος ἀοιδὸς,
Ὑμνήσας Πειάμοιο πολιν καὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν,
Ἰλιάδας τε μάχας.

The

They mention a race they had, called the Homeridæ, whom they reckoned his poſterity; they caſt medals of him; they ſhew to this day an Homærium, or temple of Homer, near Boliſſus; and cloſe their arguments with a quotation from the hymn to Apollo (which is acknowledged for Homer's by * Thucydides) where he calls himſelf, "The blind man that inhabits Chios." The reader has here the ſum of the large treatiſe of Leo Allatius, written particularly on this ſubject †, in which, after having ſeparately weighed the pretenſions of all, he concludes for Chios. For my part, I determine nothing in a point of ſo much uncertainty; neither which of theſe was honoured with his birth, nor whether any of them was, nor whether each may not have produced his own Homer; ſince ‡ Xenophon ſays, there were many of the name. But one cannot avoid being ſurprized at the prodigious veneration for his character, which could engage mankind with ſuch eagerneſs in a point ſo little eſſential; that kings ſhould ſend to oracles for the inquiry of his birth-place; that cities ſhould be in ſtrife about it, that whole lives of learned men ſhould be employed upon it; that ſome ſhould write treatiſes; that others ſhould call up ſpirits about it; that thus, in ſhort, heaven, earth, and hell ſhould be ſought to, for the deciſion of a queſtion which terminates in curioſity only.

His Parents.

If we endeavour to find the *parents* of Homer, the ſearch is as fruitleſs. ‖ Ephorus had made Mæon to be his father, by a niece whom he defloured; and this has ſo far obtained, as to give him the derivative name of Mæonides. His mother (if we allow the ſtory of Mæon) is called Crytheis: but we are loſt again in uncertainty, if we ſearch farther: for Suidas has mentioned Eumetis or Polycaſte; and § Pauſanias, Clymene, or Themiſto; which happens, becauſe the conteſting countries find out mothers of their own for him. Tradition has in this caſe afforded us no more light, than what may ſerve to ſhew its ſhadows in confuſion;

* Thucyd. lib. 3.
† Leo Allatius de patria Homeri.
‡ Xenophon de Æquivocis.
‖ Plut. vita Hom. ex Ephoro.
§ Pauſanias l. 10.

they

they ſtrike the ſight with ſo equal a probability, that we are in doubt which to chuſe, and muſt paſs the queſtion undecided.

His Name. If we inquire concerning his own *name*, even that is doubted of. He has been called Meleſigenes, from the river where he was born. Homer has been reckoned an aſcititious name, from ſome accident in his life: The Certamen Homericum calls him once Auletes, perhaps from his muſical genius; and * Lucian, Tigranes; it may be from a confuſion with that Tigranes or † Tigretes, who was brother of queen Artemiſia, and whoſe name has been ſo far mingled with his, as to make him be eſteemed author of ſome of the leſſer works which are aſcribed to Homer. It may not be amiſs to cloſe theſe criticiſms with that agreeable deriſion wherewith Lucian treats the humour of grammarians in their ſearch after minute and impoſſible inquiries, when he feigns, that he had talked over the point with Homer, in the iſland of the Bleſſed. "I aſked him, ſays he, of "what country he was? A queſtion hard to be reſol-"ved with us; to which he anſwered, He could not "certainly tell, becauſe ſome had informed him, that "he was of Chios, ſome of Smyrna, and others of "Colophon; but he took himſelf for a Babylonian; "and ſaid he was called Tigranes, while he lived "among his countrymen; and Homer, while he was "a hoſtage among the Grecians."

His Blindneſs. At his birth he appears not to have been *blind*, whatever he might be afterwards. The ‡ Chian medal of him, which is of great antiquity, according to Leo Allatius) ſeats him with a volume open, and reading intently But there is no need of proofs from antiquity for that which every line of his works will demonſtrate. With what an exactneſs, agreeable to the natural appearance of things, do his cities ſtand, his mountains riſe, his rivers wind, and his regions lie extended! How beautifully are the views of all things drawn in their figures,

* Lucian's true hiſtory, l. 2. † Suidas de Tigrete.

‡ *The medal is exhibited at the beginning of this eſſay.*

and

and adorned with their paintings! What addreſs in action, what viſible characters of the paſſions inſpirit his heroes! It is not to be imagined, that a man could have been always blind, who thus inimitably copies nature, and gives every where the proper proportion, figure, colour, and life: "*Quem ſi quis* "*cæcum genitum putat* (ſays * Paterculus) *omnibus* "*ſenſibus orbus eſt.*" He muſt certainly have beheld the creation, conſidered it with a long attention, and enriched his fancy by the moſt ſenſible knowledge of thoſe ideas which he makes the reader ſee while he but deſcribes them

His Education and Maſter.

As he grew forward in years, he was trained up to learning if we credit † Diodorus) under one "Prona-" pides, a man of excellent natural endowments, who "taught the Pelaſgic letter invented by Linus."

His Travels.

When he was of riper years, for his farther accompliſhment and the gratification of his thirſt of knowledge, he ſpent a conſiderable part of his time in travelling. Upon which account, ‡ Proclus has taken notice that he muſt have been rich: "For long travels, ſays he, occaſion high "expences, and eſpecially at thoſe times when men "could neither ſail without imminent danger and in-"conveniences, nor had a regulated manner of com-"merce with one another." This way of reaſoning appears very probable; and if it does not prove him to have been rich, it ſhews him, at leaſt, to have had patrons of a generous ſpirit; who obſerving the vaſtneſs of his capacity, believed themſelves beneficent to mankind, while they ſupported one who ſeemed born for ſomething extraordinary.

Egypt being at that time the ſeat of learning, the greateſt wits and geniuſes of Greece uſed to travel thither. Among theſe ‖ Diodorus reckons Homer, and to ſtrengthen his opinion, alledges, that multitude of their notions which he has received into his poetry, and of their cuſtoms, to which he alludes in his fic-

* Paterculus, l. 1. † Diod. Sic. l. 3. ‡ Procl. vita Hom. ‖ Diod. Sic. l. 1.

tions:

tions: ſuch as his Gods, which are named from the firſt Egyptian kings; the number of the Muſes taken from the *nine Minſtrels* which attended Oſiris; the feaſt wherein they uſed to ſend their ſtatues of the deities into Ethiopia, and to return after twelve days; and the carrying their dead bodies over the lake to a pleaſant place called Acheruſia near Memphis, from whence aroſe the ſtories of Charon, Styx, and Elyſium. Theſe are notions which ſo abound in him, as to make * Herodotus ſay, He had introduced from thence the religion of Greece. And if others have believed he was an Egyptian, from his knowledge of their rites and traditions, which were revealed but to few, and of the arts and cuſtoms which were practiſed among them in general; it may prove at leaſt thus much, that he muſt have travelled there.

As Greece was in all probability his native country, And had then began to make an effort in learning, we cannot doubt but he travelled there alſo, with a particular obſervation. He uſes the different dialects which are ſpoken in its different parts, as one who had been converſant with them all. But the argument which appears moſt irrefragable, is to be taken from his *catalogue* of the *ſhips*. He has there given us an exact geography of Greece, where its cities, mountains, and plains, are particularly mentioned, where the courſes of its rivers are traced out, where the countries are laid in order, their bounds aſſigned, and the uſes of their ſoils ſpecified. This the ancients, who compared it with the original, have allowed to be ſo true in all points, that it could never have been owing to a looſe and caſual information: even Strabo's account of Greece is but a kind of commentary upon Homer's.

We may carry this argument farther, to ſuppoſe his having been round Aſia Minor, from his exact di-

* Ἡσίοδον γὰρ καὶ Ὅμηρον ἡλικίην τετρακοσίοισι ἔτεσι δοκέω μὲν πρεσβυτέρους γενέσθαι, καὶ οὐ πλέοσι· οὗτοι δέ εἰσι οἱ ποιήσαντες θεογονίην Ἕλλησι, καὶ τοῖσι θεοῖσι τὰς ἐπωνυμίας δόντες, καὶ τιμὰς τε καὶ τέχνας διελόντες, καὶ εἴδεα αὐτῶν σημήναντες. Herodot. l. 2.

viſion

viſion of the *Regnum Priami vetus* (as Horace calls it) into its ſeparate Dynaſties, and the account he gives of the bordering nations in alliance with it. Perhaps too, in the wanderings of Ulyſſes about Sicily, whoſe ports and neighbouring iſlands are mentioned, he might contrive to ſend his hero where he had made his own voyage before. Nor will the fables he has intermingled be any objection to his having travelled in thoſe parts, ſince they are not related as the hiſtory of the preſent time, but the tradition of the former. His mention of Thrace, his deſcription of the beaſts of Lybia, and of the climate in the Fortunate Iſlands, may ſeem alſo to give us a view of him in the extremes of the earth, where it was not barbarous or uninhabited. It is hard to ſet limits to the travels of a man, who has ſet none to that deſire of knowledge which made him undertake them. Who can ſay what people he has not ſeen, who appears to be verſed in the cuſtoms of all? He takes the globe for the ſcene on which he introduces his ſubjects; he launches forward intrepidly, like one to whom no place is new, and appears a citizen of the world in general.

When he returned from his travels, he ſeems to have applied himſelf to the finiſhing of his poems, however he might have either deſigned, begun, or purſued them before. In theſe he treaſured up his various acquiſitions of knowledge, where they have been preſerved through many ages, to be as well the proofs of his own induſtry, as the inſtructions of poſterity. He could then deſcribe his ſacrifices after the Æolian manner; or * his leagues with a mixture of Trojan and Spartan ceremonies: † He could then compare the confuſion of a multitude to that tumult he had obſerved in the Icarian ſea, daſhing and breaking among its croud of iſlands: He could repreſent the numbers of an army, by thoſe flocks of ‡ ſwans he had ſeen on the banks of the Cayſter; or being to deſcribe that heat of battle with which Achilles drove the Trojans into the river, ‖ he could illuſtrate it with

* Iliad 3. † Iliad 2. v. 145. ‡ Iliad 2. v. 461. ‖ Iliad 21. v. 12.

an alluſion from Cyrene or Cyprus, where, when the inhabitants burned their fields, the graſhoppers fled before the fire to periſh in the ocean. His fancy being fully repleniſhed, might ſupply him with every proper occaſional images; and his ſoul after having enlarged itſelf, and taken in an extenſive variety of the creation, might be equal to the taſk of an Iliad and an Odyſſey.

His old age and death. In his old age, he fell blind, and ſettled at Chios, as he ſays in the hymn to Apollo, (which, as is before obſerved, is acknowledged for his by Thucydides, and might occaſion both Simonides and Theocritus to call him a Chian.) * Strabo relates, That Lycurgus, the great legiſlator of Sparta, was reported to have gone to Chios to have a conference with Homer, after he had ſtudied the laws of Crete and Egypt, in order to form his conſtitutions. If this be true, how much a nobler repreſentation does it give him, and indeed more agreeable to what we conceive of this mighty genius, than thoſe ſpurious accounts which keep him down among the meaneſt of mankind! What an idea could we frame to ourſelves, of a converſation held between two perſons ſo conſiderable; a philoſopher conſcious of the force of poetry, and a poet knowing in the depths of philoſophy; both their ſouls improved with learning, both eminently raiſed above little deſigns or the meaner kind of intereſt, and meeting together to conſult the good of mankind! But in this I have only indulged a thought which is not to be inſiſted upon; the evidence of hiſtory rather tends to prove that Lycurgus brought his works from Aſia after his death: which † Proclus imagines to have happened at a great old age, on account of his vaſt extent of learning, for which a ſhort life could never ſuffice.

His character and manners. If we would now make a conjecture concerning the genius and temper of this great man; perhaps his works, which would not furniſh us with facts for his life, will be more reaſonably made uſe of to give us a picture of

* Strabo, l. 10. † Procl. vita Hom.

his

his mind: To this end, therefore, we may ſuffer the very name and notion of a book to vaniſh for a while, and look upon what is left us as a converſation, in order to gain an aquaintance with Homer. Perhaps the general air of his works will become the general character of his genius; and the particular obſervations give ſome light to the particular turns of his temper. His comprehenſive knowledge ſhews that his ſoul was not formed like a narrow channel for a ſingle ſtream; but as an expanſe which might receive an ocean into its boſom; that he had the ſtrongeſt deſire of improvement, and an unbounded curioſity, which made its advantage of every tranſient circumſtance, or obvious accident. His ſolid and ſententious manner may make us admire him for a man of judgement: one who, in the darkeſt ages, could enter far into a diſquiſition of human nature; who, notwithſtanding all the changes which governments, manners, rites, and even the notions of virtue, have undergone, and notwithſtanding the improvements ſince made in arts, could ſtill abound with ſo many maxims correſpondent to truth, and notions applicable to ſo many ſciences. The fire, which is ſo obſervable in his poem, may make us naturally conjecture him to have been of a warm temper, and lively behaviour; and the pleaſurable air which every where overſpreads it, may give us reaſon to think, that fire of imagination was tempered with ſweetneſs and affability. If we farther obſerve the particulars he treat of, and imagine that he laid a ſtreſs upon the ſentiments he delivers, purſuant to his real opinions; we ſhall take him to be of a religious ſpirit, by his inculcating in almoſt every page the worſhip of the Gods. We ſhall imagine him to be a generous lover of his country, from his care to extol it every where; which is carried to ſuch a height, as to make * Plutarch obſerve, That though many of the Barbarians are made priſoners or ſuppliants, yet neither of theſe diſgraceful accidents (which are common to all nations in war) ever happens to one Greek throughout his works. We ſhall take him to be a com-

* Plutarch. de Aud. Poetis.

paſſionate lover of mankind, from his numberleſs praiſes of hoſpitality and charity; (if indeed we are not to account for them, as the common writers of his life imagine, from his owing his ſupport to theſe virtues.) It might ſeem from his love of ſtories, with his manner of telling them ſometimes, that he gave his own picture, when he painted his Neſtor, and, as wiſe as he was, was no enemy to talking. One would think from his praiſes of wine, his copious goblets, and pleaſing deſcriptions of banquets, that he was addicted to a chearful, ſociable life, which Horace takes notice of as a kind of tradition;

"Laudibus arguitur vini vinoſus Homerus."
Ep. 19. l. 1.

And that he was not (as may be gueſſed of Virgil from his works) averſe to the female ſex, will appear from his care to paint them amiably upon all occaſions; his Andromache and Penelope are in each of his poems moſt ſhining characters of conjugal affection; even his Helena herſelf is drawn with all the ſoftenings imaginable; his ſoldiers are exhorted to combat with the hopes of women: his commanders are furniſhed with fair ſlaves in their tents, nor is the venerable Neſtor without a miſtreſs.

It is true, that in this way of turning a book into a man, this reaſoning from his works to himſelf, we can at beſt but hit off a few outlines of a character: wherefore I ſhall carry it no farther, but conclude with one diſcovery which we may make from his ſilence; a diſcovery extremely proper to be made in this manner, which is, that he was of a very modeſt temper. There is in all other poets a cuſtom of ſpeaking of themſelves, and a vanity of promiſing eternity to their writings; in both which Homer, who has the beſt title to ſpeak out, is altogether ſilent. As to the laſt of them, the world has made him ample recompence; it has given him that eternity he would not promiſe himſelf: but whatever endeavours have been offered in reſpect of the former, we find ourſelves ſtill under an irreparable loſs. That which others have ſaid of him has amounted to no more than conjecture;

ture; that which I have ſaid is no further to be inſiſted on. I have uſed the liberty which may be indulged me by precedent, to give my own opinions among the accounts of others, and the world may be pleaſed to receive them as ſo many willing endeavours to gratify its curioſity.

Catalogue of his works. The only inconteſtable works which Homer has left behind him are the Iliad and Odyſſey: The Batrachomyomachia or battle of the frogs and mice, has been diſputed, but is however allowed for his by many authors; amongſt whom * Statius has reckoned it like the Culex of Virgil, a trial of force before his greater performances. It is indeed a beautiful piece of raillery, in which a great writer might delight to unbend himſelf; an inſtance of that agreeable trifling, which has been at ſome time or other indulged by the fineſt geniuſes, and the offspring of that amuſing and chearful humour, which generally accompanies the character of a rich imagination, like a vein of Mercury running with a mine of gold.

The Hymns have been doubted alſo, and attributed by the ſcholiaſts to Cynœthus the rhapſodiſt; but neither † Thucydides, ‡ Lucian, nor § Pauſanias, have ſcrupled to cite them as genuine. We have the authority of the two former for that to Apollo, though it be obſerved, that the word Νόμος is found in it, which the book De Poeſi Homerica (aſcribed to Plutarch) tells us, was not in uſe in Homer's time. We have alſo an authority of the laſt for a ** Hymn to Ceres, of which he has given us a fragment. That to Mars is objected againſt, for mentioning Τέκμωρ, and that which is the firſt to Minerva, for Τυχὴ, both of them being (according to the author of the treatiſe before mentioned) words of a later invention. The hymn to Venus has many of its lines copied by Virgil, in the interview between Æneas and that goddeſs in the firſt Æneid. But whether theſe hymns

* Statius Præf. ad Sylv. 1. † Thucyd. l. 3. ‡ Lucian Phalarid. 2. § Pauſan. Bœotic. ** Pauſ. Meſſen.

are Homer's or not, they are always judged to be near as ancient, if not of the ſame age with him.

The Epigrams are extracted out of the life, ſaid to be written by Herodotus, and we leave them as ſuch to ſtand or fall with it; except the epitaph on Midas, which is very ancient, quoted without its author both by * Plato and † Longinus, and (according to ‡ Laertius) aſcribed by Simonides to Cleobulus the wiſe man; who, living after Homer, anſwers better to the age of Midas the ſon of Gordias.

The Margites, which is loſt, is ſaid by § Ariſtotle to have been a poem of a comic nature, wherein Homer made uſe of Iambic verſes as proper for raillery. It was a jeſt upon the fair ſex, and had its name from one Margites, a weak man, who was the ſubject of it. The ſtory is ſomething looſe, as may be ſeen by the account of it ſtill preſerved in ** Euſtathius's comment on the Odyſſey.

The Cercopes was a ſatyrical work, which is alſo loſt; we may however imagine it was levelled againſt the vices of men, if our conjecture be right, that it was founded upon the †† old fable of Cercopes, a nation who were turned into monkies for their frauds and impoſtures.

The Deſtruction of Oechalia, was a poem of which (according to Euſtathius) Hercules was the hero; and the ſubject, his ravaging that country; becauſe Eurytus the king had denied him his daughter Iole.

The Ilias Minor was a piece which included both the taking of Troy, and the return of the Grecians: In this was the ſtory of Sinon, which Virgil has made uſe of. ‡‡ Ariſtotle has judged it not to belong to Homer.

The Cypriacs, if it was upon them that Nævius founded his Ilias Cypria, (as §§ Mr. Dacier conjectures) were the love adventures of the ladies at the ſiege: theſe are rejected by ** Herodotus, for ſaying

* Plat. in Phæd. † Longin. § 36. edit. Tollii, ‡ Laert. in vita Cleobuli. § Ariſt. Poet. cap. 4. ** Euſtath. in Odyſſ. 10. †† Ovid. Metam. l. 14. de Cercop. ‡‡ Ariſt. poet. cap. 24. §§ Dac. on Ariſt. Poet. cap. 24. ** Herod. l. 2.

that

that Paris brought Helen to Troy in three days; whereas Homer aſſerts they were long driven from place to place.

There are other things aſcribed to him, ſuch as the Heptapeſtion goat, the Arachnomachia, &c. in the ludicrous manner; and the Thebais, Epigoni, or ſecond ſiege of Thebes, the Phocais, Amazonia, &c. in the ſerious: which, if they were his, are to be reputed a real loſs to the learned world. Time, in ſome things, may have prevailed over Homer himſelf, and left only the names of theſe works, as memorials that ſuch were in being; but while the Iliad and Odyſſey remain, he ſeems like a leader, who, though in his attempt of univerſal conqueſt he may have loſt his advanced guards, or ſome few ſtragglers in the rear, yet with his main body ever victorious, paſſed in triumph through all ages.

Monuments, coins, marbles, remaining of him.

The remains we have, at preſent, of thoſe monuments antiquity had framed for him, are but few. It could not be thought that they who knew ſo little of the life of Homer, could have a right knowledge of his perſon: yet they had ſtatues of him as of their gods, whoſe forms they had never ſeen. "*Quinimo quæ non ſunt, finguntur* (ſays "* Pliny) *pariuntque deſideria non traditi vultus, ſicut "in Homero evenit.*" But though the ancient portraits of him ſeem purely notional, yet they agree (as I think † Fabretti has obſerved) in repreſenting him with a ſhort curled beard, and diſtinct marks of age in his forehead. That which is prefixed to this book, is taken from an ancient marble buſt in the palace of Farneſe at Rome.

In Boliſſus near Chios, there is a ruin, which was ſhewn for the houſe of Homer, which ‡ Leo Allatius went on pilgrimage to viſit, and (as he tells us) found nothing but a few ſtones crumbling away with age,

* Pliny, l. 35. c. 2. † Raph. Fabret. Explicatio Veteris Tabellæ Anaglyphæ, Hom. Iliad. ‡ Leo Allat. de patria Hom. cap. 13. § Cicero pro Archia.

over

over which he and his companions wept for ſatisfaction.

They erected temples to Homer in Smyrna, as appears from * Cicero; one of theſe is ſuppoſed to be yet extant, and the ſame which they ſhew for the temple Janus. It agrees with † Strabo's deſcription, a ſquare building of ſtone, near a river, thought to be the Meles, with two doors oppoſite to each other, north and ſouth, and a large niche within the eaſt wall, where the image ſtood: but M. Spon denies this to be the true Homerium.

Of the medals ſtruck for him, there are ſome both of Chios and Smyrna ſtill in being, and exhibited at the beginning of this eſſay. The moſt valuable with reſpect to the largeneſs of the head, is that of Amaſtris, which is carefully copied from an original belonging to the preſent Earl of Pembroke, and is the ſame which Gronovius, Cuperus and Dacier have copies of, but very incorrectly performed.

But that which of all the remains has been of late the chief amuſement of the learned, is the marble called his Apotheoſis, the work of Archelaus of Priene, and now in the palace of Colonna. We ſee there a temple hung with its veil, where Homer is placed on a ſeat with a footſtool to it, as he has deſcribed the ſeats of his Gods; ſupported on each ſide with figures repreſenting the Iliad and the Odyſſey, the one by a ſword, the other by the ornament of a ſhip, which denotes the voyage of Ulyſſes. On each ſide of his footſtool are mice, in alluſion to the Batrachomyomachia. Behind is Time waiting upon him, and a figure with turrets on his head, which ſignifies the World, crowning him with the laurel. Before him is an altar, at which all the Arts are ſacrificing to him as to their deity. On one ſide of the altar ſtands a boy, repreſenting Mythology; on the other a woman, repreſenting Hiſtory; after her is Poetry bringing the ſacred fire; and in a long following train, Tragedy, Comedy, Nature Virtue, Memory, Rhetoric, and Wiſdom, in all their proper attitudes.

* Cicero pro Archia, † Strabo, l. 14. Τὸ Ὁμήρειον, καὶ τετράγωνος ἴχνος τῶν Ὁμήρου καὶ ξοάνου, etc. de Smyrna.

SECT.

SECT. II.

HAVING now finiſhed what was propoſed concerning the hiſtory of Homer's life, I ſhall proceed to that of his works; and conſidering him no longer as a *man*, but as an *author*, proſecute the thread of his ſtory in this his ſecond life, through the different degrees of eſteem which thoſe writings have obtained in different periods of time.

It has been the fortune of ſeveral great geniuſes not to be known while they lived, either for want of hiſtorians, the meanneſs of fortune, or the love of retirement, to which a poetical temper is peculiarly addicted. Yet after death their works give themſelves a life in Fame, without the help of an hiſtorian; and, notwithſtanding the meanneſs of their author, or his love of retreat, they go forth among mankind, the glories of that age which produced them, and the delight of thoſe which follow it. This is a fate particularly verified in Homer, than whom no conſiderable author is leſs known as to himſelf, or more highly valued as to his productions.

The firſt publication of his works by Lycurgus.

The earlieſt account of theſe is ſaid by * Plutarch to be ſome time after his death, when Lycurgus ſailed to Aſia: "There he had the firſt ſight "of Homer's works, which were probably preſerved "by the grandchildren of Creophilus; and having "obſerved that their pleaſurable air of fiction did not "hinder the poet's abounding in maxims of ſtate, and "rules of morality, he tranſcribed and carried with him "that entire collection we have now among us: for "at that time (continues this author) there was only "an obſcure rumour in Greece to the reputation of "theſe poems, and but a few ſcattered fragments "handed about, till Lycurgus publiſhed them entire." Thus they were in danger of being loſt as ſoon as they were produced, by the misfortune of the age, a want of taſte for learning, or the manner in which they

* Plut. vita Lycurgi.

were

were left to poſterity, when they fell into the hands of Lycurgus. He was a man of great learning, a lawgiver to a people divided and untractable, and one who had a notion that poetry influenced and civilized the minds of men; which made him ſmoothe the way to his conſtitution by the ſongs of Thales the Cretan, whom he engaged to write upon obedience and concord. As he propoſed to himſelf, that the conſtitution he would raiſe upon this their union ſhould be of a martial nature, theſe poems were of an extraordinary value to him; for they came with a full force into his ſcheme; the moral they inſpired was unity; the air they breathed was martial; and their ſtory had this particular engagement for the Lacedæmonians, that it ſhewed Greece in war, and Aſia ſubdued under the conduct of one of their own monarchs, who commanded all the Grecian princes. Thus the poet both pleaſed the lawgiver and the people; from whence he had a double influence when the laws were ſettled. For his poem then became a panegyric on their conſtitution, as well as a regiſter of their glory; and confirmed them in the love of it by a gallant deſcription of thoſe qualities and actions for which it was adapted. This made * Cleomenes call him *the poet of the Lacedæmonians*: and therefore when we remember that Homer owed the publication of his works to Lycurgus, we ſhould grant too, that Lycurgus owed in ſome degree the enforcement of his laws to the works of Homer.

Their reception in Greece.

At their firſt appearance in Greece, they were not reduced into a regular body, but remained as they were brought over, in ſeveral ſeparate pieces, called (according to † Ælian) from the ſubject on which they treated; as the *battle at the ſhips*, *the death of Dolon*, *the valour of Agamemnon*, *the Patroclea*, *the grot of Calypſo*, *ſlaughter of the wooers*, and the like. Nor were theſe entitled *books*, but *rhapſodies*; from whence they who ſung them had the title of *rhapſodiſts*. It was in this manner they began to be diſperſed, while their poetry, their hiſtory, the glory they aſcribed to Greece

* Plutarch Apophthegm. † Ælian. l. 13. cap. 14.

in

in general, the particular deſcription they gave of it, and the complement they paid to every little ſtate by an honourable mention, ſo influenced all, that they were tranſcribed and ſung with general approbation. But what ſeems to have moſt recommended them was, that Greece which could not be great in its divided condition, looked upon the fable of them as a likely plan of future grandeur. They ſeem from thenceforward to have had an eye upon the conqueſt of Aſia, as a proper undertaking, which by its importance might occaſion union enough to give a diverſion from civil wars, and by its proſecution bring in an acquiſition of honour and empire. This is the meaning of * Iſocrates, when he tells us, "That Homer's poetry "was in the greater eſteem, becauſe it gave exceeding "praiſe to thoſe who fought againſt the Barbarians. "Our anceſtors (continues he) honoured it with a "place in education and muſical conteſts, that by often hearing it, we ſhould have a notion of an original enmity between us and thoſe nations; and that "admiring the virtue of thoſe who fought at Troy, "we ſhould be induced to emulate their glory." And indeed they never quitted this thought, till they had ſucceſsfully carried their arms wherever Homer might thus excite them.

Digeſted into order at Athens.

But while his works were ſuffered to lie in a diſtracted manner, the chain of ſtory was not always perceived, ſo that they loſt much of their force and beauty by being read diſorderly. Wherefore as Lacedæmon had the firſt honour of their publication by Lycurgus, that of their regulation fell to the ſhare of Athens in the time of † Solon, who himſelf made a law for their

* Οἶμαι δὲ καὶ τὴν Ὁμήρου ποίησιν μεῖζω λαβεῖν δόξαν, ὅτι καλῶς τοὺς πολεμικοὺς λόγους τοῖς βαρβάροις ἐνεκωμίασεν· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο βουληθῆναι τοὺς προγόνους ἡμῶν ἔντιμον αὐτὴν ποιῆσαι τὴν τέχνην, ἵν' τε τοῖς τῆς μουσικῆς ἀθλοῖς, καὶ τῇ παιδεύσει τῶν νεωτέρων· ἵνα πολλάκις ἀκούοντες τῶν ἐκείνων, ἐκμανθάνωμεν τὴν ἔχθραν τὴν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὑπάρχουσαν, καὶ ζηλοῦντες τὰς ἀρετὰς τῶν στρατευσαμένων ἐπὶ Τροίαν τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων ἐκείνοις ἐπιθυμῶμεν. Isocrat. Paneg.

† Diog. Laert. vit. Sol.

recital.

recital. It was then that Piſiſtratus, the tyrant of Athens, who was a man of great learning and eloquence, (as * Cicero has it) firſt put together the confuſed parts of Homer, according to that regularity in which they are now handed down to us. He divided them into two different works, entitled the Iliad and Odyſſey; he digeſted each according to the author's deſign, to make their plans become evident; and diſtinguiſhed each again into twenty-four books, to which were afterwards prefixed the twenty-four letters. There is a paſſage indeed in † Plato, which takes this work from Piſiſtratus, by giving it to his ſon Hipparchus; with this addition, that he commanded them to be ſung at the feaſt called *Panathenæa*. Perhaps it may be, as ‡ Leo Allatius has imagined, becauſe the ſon publiſhed the copy more correctly: Thus he offers, to reconcile ſo great a teſtimony as Plato's to the cloud of witneſſes which are againſt him in it: but be that as it will, Athens ſtill claims its proper honour of reſcuing the father of learning from the injuries of time of having reſtored Homer to himſelf, and given the world a view of him in his perfection. So that if his verſes were before admired for their uſe and beauty, as the ſtars were, before they were conſidered ſcientifically as a ſyſtem, they were now admired much more for their graceful harmony, and that ſphere of order in which they appear to move. They became thenceforward more the pleaſure of the wits of Greece, more the ſubject of their ſtudies, and the employment of their pens.

About the time that this new edition of Homer was publiſhed in Athens, there was one Cynæthus, a learned rhapſodiſt, who (as the § ſcholiaſt of Pindar informs us) ſettled firſt at Syracuſe in that employment; and if (as Leo Allatius believes) he had been before an aſſiſtant in the edition, he may be ſuppoſed to have firſt

* Quis Doctior iiſdem illis temporibus, aut cujus eloquentia literis inſtructior quam Piſiſtrati? Qui primus Homeri libros, confuſos antea, ſic diſpoſuiſſe dicitur ut nunc habemus. Cic. de Orat. 3. Vide etiam Æl. l. 13. cap. 14. Liban. Panegyr. in Jul. Anonymam Homeri vitam, Fuſius vero in Commentatoribus Dyon. Thracis.

† Plato in Hipparcho. ‡ Leo Allatius de patria Hom. cap. 5. § Schol. Pind. in Nem. Od. 2.

carried

carried it abroad. But it was not long preſerved correct among his followers; they committed miſtakes in their tranſcriptions and repetitions, and had even the preſumption to alter ſome lines, and interpolate others. Thus the works of Homer run the danger of being utterly defaced; which made it become the concern of kings and philoſophers, that they ſhould be reſtored to their primitive beauty.

The Edition in Macedon under Alexander.

In the front of theſe is Alexander the Great, for whom they will appear peculiarly calculated, if we conſider that no books more enliven or flatter perſonal valour, which was great in him to what we call romantic: Neither has any books more places applicable to his deſigns on Aſia, or (as it happened) to his actions there. It was then no ill compliment in * Ariſtotle to purge the Iliad, upon his account, from thoſe errors and additions which had crept into it. And ſo far was Alexander himſelf from eſteeming it a matter of ſmall importance, that he afterwards † aſſiſted in a ſtrict review of it with Anaxarchus and Calliſthenes: whether it was becauſe he eſteemed it a treaſury of military virtue and knowledge; or that (according to a late ingenious conjecture) he had a farther aim in promoting the propagation of it, when he was ambitious to be eſteemed a ſon of Jupiter; as a book which treating of the ſons of the Gods, might make the intercourſe between them and mortals become a familiar notion. The review being finiſhed, he laid it up in a caſket, which was found among the ſpoils of Darius, as what beſt deſerved ſo inestimable a caſe; and from this circumſtance it was named, *the Edition of the Caſket.*

Editions in Egypt.

The place where the works of Homer were next found in the greateſt regard, is Egypt, under the reign of the Ptolemies.

* Plut. in vita Alexandri.

† Φέρεται γῶν τις διόρθωσις τῆς Ὁμήρου ποιήσεως ἡ ἐκ τῆ Νάρθηκος λεγομένη τῆ Αλεξάνδρε μετὰ τῆ περὶ Καλλισθένην καὶ Ἀναξάρχον ἐπιλεθέντος, καὶ σημεῖω σαμένε ἕπειτα καταθέντος εἰς Νάρθηκα ὃν εὗρεν ἐν Περσικῆ γάζῃ πολυτελῶς κατεσκευασμένον. Strabo, lib. 13.

Theſe kings being deſcended from Greece, retained always a paſſion for their original country. The men, the books, the qualifications of it, were in eſteem in their court; they preſerved the language in their family; they encouraged a concourſe of learned men; erected the greateſt library in the world; and trained up their princes under Grecian tutors; amongſt whom the moſt conſiderable were appointed for reviſers of Homer. The firſt of theſe was * Zenodotus, library-keeper to the firſt Ptolemy, and qualified for this undertaking by being both a poet and a grammarian: but neither his copy, nor that which his diſciple Ariſtophanes had made, ſatisfying Ariſtarchus, (whom Ptolemy Philometor had appointed over his ſon Euergetes) he ſet himſelf to another correction with all the wit and learning he was maſter of. He reſtored ſome verſes to their former readings, rejected others which he marked with obeliſks as ſpurious, and proceeded with ſuch induſtrious accuracy, that, notwithſtanding there were ſome who wrote againſt his performance, antiquity has generally acquieſced in it. Nay, ſo far have they carried their opinion in his favour, as to call a man an † Ariſtarchus, when they meant to ſay a candid, judicious critic; in the ſame manner as they call the contrary a Zoilus, from that Zoilus who about this time wrote an envious criticiſm againſt Homer. And now we mention theſe two together, I fancy it will be no ſmall pleaſure to the benevolent part of mankind, to ſee how their fortunes and characters ſtand in contraſt to each other, for examples to future ages, at the head of the two contrary ſorts of criticiſm, which proceed from good-nature or from ill-will. The one was honoured with the offices and countenance of the court; the other, when he ‡ applied to the ſame place for an encouragement amongſt the men of learning, had his petition rejected with contempt. The one had his fame continued to poſterity; the other is only remembered with infamy. If the one had antagoniſts,

* Suidas.

† Arguit ambigue dictum; mutanda notabit;
Fiet Ariſtarchus——— Horat. Ars Poetica.

‡ Vitruv. l. 7. in Proœm.

they

they were obliged to pay him the deference of a formal anſwer; the other was never anſwered but in general, with thoſe opprobrious names of *Thracian ſlave* and *rhetorical dog* The one is ſuppoſed to have his copy ſtill remaining; while the other's remarks are periſhed, as things that men are aſhamed to preſerve, the juſt deſert of whatever ariſes from the miſerable principles of ill-will or envy.

In Syria and other parts of Aſia.

It was not the ambition of Egypt only to have a correct edition of Homer. We find in the life of * the poet Aratus, that he having finiſhed a copy of the Odyſſey, was ſent for by Antiochus king of Syria, and entertained by him while he finiſhed one of the Iliads. We read too of others which were publiſhed with the names of countries; ſuch as the † Meſſaliotic and Sinopic; as if the world were agreed to make his works in their ſurvival undergo the ſame fate with himſelf; and that as different cities contended for his birth, ſo they might again contend for his true edition. But though theſe reviews were not confined to Egypt, the greateſt honour was theirs, in that univerſal approbation which the performance of Ariſtarchus received; and if it be not his edition which we have at preſent, we know not to whom to aſcribe it.

In India and Perſia.

But the world was not contented barely to have ſettled an edition of his works. There were innumerable comments, in which they were opened like a treaſury of learning; and tranſlations, whereby other languages became enriched by an effuſion of his ſpirit of poetry. ‡ Ælian tells us, that even the Indians had them in their tongue, and the Perſian kings ſung them in theirs. ‖ Perſius mentions a verſion into Latin by Labeo; and in general the paſſages and imitations which are taken from him, are ſo numerous, that he may be ſaid to have been tranſlated by piece-meal into that, and all other languages: which afford us this remark, that there is hardly any thing in him, which has not been pitched upon by ſome author or other as a particular beauty.

* Autor vitæ Arati, et Suidas in Arato. † Euſtathius initio Iliados. ‡ Ælian, l. 12. cap. 48. ‖ Perſius, Sat. 1.

The extent and height of their reputation in the heathen world.

It is almoſt incredible to what an height the idea of that veneration the ancients paid to Homer will ariſe, to one who reads particularly with this view, through all theſe periods. He was no ſooner come from his obſcurity, but Greece received him with delight and profit: there were then but few books to divide their attention, and none which had a better title to engroſs it all. They made ſome daily diſcoveries of his beauties, which were ſtill promoted in their different channels by the favourite qualities of different nations. Sparta and Macedon conſidered him moſt in reſpect of his warlike ſpirit; Athens and Egypt with regard to his poetry and learning; and all their endeavours united under the hands of the learned, to make him blaze forth into an univerſal character. His works, which from the beginning paſſed for excellent poetry, grew to be hiſtory and geography; they roſe to be a magazine of ſciences; were exalted into a ſcheme of religion; gave a ſanction to whatever rites they mentioned, were quoted in all caſes for the conduct of private life, and the deciſion of all queſtions of the law of nations; nay, learned by heart as the very book of belief and practice. From him the poets drew their inſpirations, the critics their rules, and the philoſophers a defence of their opinions. Every author was fond to uſe his name, and every profeſſion writ books upon him, until they ſwelled to libraries. The warriors formed themſelves by his heroes, and the oracles delivered his verſes for anſwers. Nor was mankind ſatisfied to have ſeated his character at the top of human wiſdom, but being overborne with an imagination that he tranſcended their ſpecies, they admitted him to ſhare in thoſe honours they gave their deities. They inſtituted games for him, dedicated ſtatues, erected temples, as at Smyrna, Chios, and Alexandria; and * Ælian tells us, that when the Argives ſacrificed with their gueſts, they uſed to invoke the preſence of Apollo and Homer together.

* Ælian, l. 9. cap. 15.

Thus

Thus he was ſettled on a foot of adoration, and continued highly venerated in the Roman empire, when Chriſtianity began. Heatheniſm was then to be deſtroyed, and Homer appeared the father of it; whoſe fictions were at once the belief of the Pagan religion, and the objections of Chriſtianity againſt it. He became therefore very deeply involved in the queſtion; and not with that honour which hitherto attended him, but as a criminal who had drawn the world into folly. He was on one hand accuſed for having framed * fables upon the works of Moſes; as the rebellion of the giants from the building of Babel, and the caſting Ate or Striſe out of heaven from the fall of Lucifer. He was expoſed on the other hand for thoſe which he is ſaid to invent, as when † Arnobius cries out, "This is the man who wounded "your Venus, impriſoned your Mars, who freed even "your Jupiter by Briareus, and who finds authorities "for all your vices, *&c.* Mankind was ‡ derided for whatever he had hitherto made them believe; and ‖ Plato, who expelled him his commonwealth, has, of all the philoſophers, found the beſt quarter from the fathers, for paſſing that ſentence. His fineſt beauties began to take a new appearance of pernicious qualities; and becauſe they might be conſidered as allurements to fancy, or ſupports to thoſe errors with which they were mingled, they were to be depreciated while the conteſt of faith was in being. It was hence, that the reading them was diſcouraged; that we hear Ruffinus accuſing St. Jerome for it, and that § St. Auſtin rejects him as the grand maſter of fable; though indeed the *dulciſſime vanus* which he applies to Homer, looks but like a fondling manner of parting with them.

The decline of their character in the beginning of Chriſtianity.

This ſtrong attack againſt our author, as the great bulwark of Paganiſm, obliged the philoſophers who could have acquieſced as his admirers, to appear as

* Juſtin Martyr, Admonit. ad gentes. † Arnobius adverſus gentes, l. 7. ‡ Vid. Tertull. Apol. cap. 14. ‖ Arnobius, ibid. Euſebius, Præp. Evang. l. 14. cap. 10. § St. Auguſt, Confeſſ. l. 1. cap. 14.

his defenders; who becauſe they ſaw the fables could not be literally ſupported, endeavoured to find a hidden ſenſe, and to carry on every where that vein of allegory, which was already broken open with ſucceſs in ſome places. But how miſerably were they forced to ſhifts, when they made * Juno's dreſſing in the Ceſtos for Jupiter, to ſignify the purging of the air as it approached the fire? or the ſtory of Mars and Venus, that inclination they have to incontinency who are born when theſe planets are in conjunction? Wit and learning had here a large field to diſplay themſelves, and to diſagree in; for ſometimes Jupiter, and ſometimes Vulcan was made to ſignify the fire; or Mars and Venus were allowed to give us a lecture of morality at one time, and a problem of aſtronomy at another. And theſe ſtrange diſcoveries, which † Porphyry and the reſt would have to paſs for the genuine theology of the Greeks, prove but (as ‡ Euſebius terms it) the perverting of fables into a myſtic ſenſe. They did indeed often defend Homer, but then they allegorized away their Gods by doing ſo. What the world took for ſubſtantial objects of adoration, diſſolved into a figurative meaning, a moral truth, or a piece of learning, which might equally correſpond to any religion; and the learned at laſt had left themſelves nothing to worſhip, when they came to find an object in Chriſtianity.

Reſtoration of Homer's works to their juſt character.

The diſpute of faith being over, ancient learning reaſſumed its dignity, and Homer obtained his proper place in the eſteem of mankind. His books are no longer the ſcheme of a living religion, but become the regiſter of one of former times. They are not now received for a rule of life, but valued for thoſe juſt obſervations which are diſperſed thro' them. They are no longer pronounced from oracles, but quoted ſtill by authors for their learning Thoſe remarks which the philoſophers made upon them, have their weight with us; thoſe beauties which the poets

† Plutarch on reading the poets. † Porphyrius de Antro Nymph. &c. ‡ Euſebii Præpar. Evangel. l. 3. cap. 1.

dwelt

dwelt upon, their admiration: and even after the abatement of what was extravagant in his run of praiſe, he remains confeſſedly a mighty genius, not tranſcended by any which have ſince ariſen; a prince, as well as a father of poetry.

SECT. III.

A view of the learning of Homer's time.

IT remains in this hiſtorical eſſay, to regulate our preſent opinion of Homer by a view of his learning, compared with that of his age. For this end he may firſt be conſidered as a poet, that character which was his profeſſedly; and ſecondly as one endow-with other ſciences, which muſt be ſpoken of, not as in themſelves, but as in ſubſerviency to his main deſign. Thus he will be ſeen on his right foot of perfection in one view, and with the juſt allowances which ſhould be made on the other: While we paſs through the ſeveral heads of ſcience, the ſtate of thoſe times in which he writ will ſhow us both the impediments he roſe under, and the reaſons why ſeveral things in him which have been objected to, either could not, or ſhould not be otherwiſe than they are.

In poetry.

As for the ſtate of poetry, it was at a low pitch until the age of Homer. There is mention of Orpheus, Linus, and Muſæus, venerable names in antiquity, and eminently celebrated in fable for the wonderful power of their ſongs and muſic. The learned Fabricius, in his Bibliotheca Græca, has reckoned about ſeventy who are ſaid to have written before Homer; but their works were not preſerved, and that is a ſort of proof they were not excellent. What ſort of poets Homer ſaw in his own time, may be gathered from his deſcription of * Demodocus and Phemius, whom he has introduced to celebrate his profeſſion. The imperfect riſings of the art lay then among the *extempore* ſingers of ſtories at banquets, who were half ſingers, half muſicians. Nor was the name of poet then in being, or once uſed throughout Homer's works. From

* Od. 1ſt, and Od. 8th.

this

this poor ſtate of poetry, he has taken a handle to uſher it into the world with the boldeſt ſtroke of praiſe which has ever been given it. It is in the eighth Odyſſey, where Ulyſſes puts Demodocus upon a trial of ſkill. Demodocus having diverted the gueſts with ſome actions of the Trojan war; "* All this (ſays "Ulyſſes) you have ſung very elegantly, as if you had "either been preſent, or heard it reported; but paſs "now to a ſubject I ſhall give you, ſing the management "of Ulyſſes in the wooden horſe, juſt as it happened, "and I will acknowledge the Gods have taught you "your ſongs." This the ſinger, being inſpired from heaven, begins immediately, and Ulyſſes, by weeping at the recital, confeſſes the truth of it. We ſee here a narration which could only paſs upon an age extremely ignorant in the nature of poetry, where that claim of inſpiration is given to it which it has never ſince laid down, and (which is more) a power of propheſying at pleaſure aſcribed to it. Thus much therefore we gather from himſelf concerning the moſt ancient ſtate of poetry in Greece; that no one was honoured with the name of poet, before him whom it has eſpecially belonged to ever after. And if we farther appeal to the conſent of authors, we find he has other titles for being called the firſt. † Joſephus obſerves, That the Greeks have not conteſted, but he was the moſt ancient, whoſe books they had. ‡ Ariſtotle ſays, he was the "firſt who brought all the parts of a poem into "one piece," to which he adds, "and with true "judgement," to give him a praiſe including both the invention and perfection. Whatever was ſerious or magnificent made a part of his ſubject: War and peace were the comprehenſive diviſion in which he conſidered the world; and the plans of his poems were founded on the moſt active ſcenes of each, the adventures of a ſiege, and the accidents of a voyage. For theſe, his ſpirit was equally active and various, lofty in expreſſion, clear in narration, natural in deſcription, rapid in action, abundant in figures. If ever

* Odyſſ. l. 8. v. 487, etc.
† Joſeph. contra Appion, l. 1.
‡ Ariſt. Poet. cap. 25.

he

he appears leſs than himſelf, it is from the time he writ in; and if he runs into errors, it is from an exceſs, rather than a defect of genius. Thus he roſe over the poetical world, ſhining out like a ſun all at once; which if it ſometimes make too faint an appearance, it is to be aſcribed only to the unkindneſs of the ſeaſon that clouds and obſcures it, and if he is ſometimes too violent, we confeſs at the ſame time that we owe all things to his heat.

As for his *theology*, we ſee the Heathen ſyſtem entirely followed. This was all he could then have to work upon, and where he fails of truth for want of revelation, he at leaſt ſhews his knowledge in his own religion by the traditions he delivers. But we are now upon a point to be farther handled, becauſe the greateſt controverſy concerning the merit of Homer depends upon it. Let us conſider then, that there was an age in Greece, when natural reaſon only diſcovered in general, that there muſt be ſomething ſuperior to us, and corrupt tradition had affixed the notion to a number of deities. At this time Homer roſe with the fineſt turn imaginable for poetry, who deſigning to inſtruct mankind in the manner for which he was moſt adapted, made uſe of the miniſtry of the Gods to give the higheſt air of veneration to his writings. He found the religion of mankind conſiſting of fables; and their morality and political inſtruction delivered in allegories. Nor was it his buſineſs when he undertook the province of a poet, (not of a mere philoſopher) to be the firſt who ſhould diſcard that which furniſhes poetry with its moſt beautiful appearance: and eſpecially, ſince the age he lived in, by diſcovering its taſte, had not only given him authority, but even put him under the neceſſity of preſerving it. Whatever therefore he might think of his Gods, he took them as he found them: he brought them into action according to the notions that were then entertained, and in ſuch ſtories as were then believed; unleſs we imagine ſo great an abſurdity, as that he invented every thing he delivers. Yet there are ſeveral rays of truth ſtreaming through all this darkneſs, in thoſe ſentiments he entertains concerning the providence of the *Theology.*

Gods,

Gods, delivered in ſeveral allegories lightly veiled over, from whence the learned afterwards pretended to draw new knowledges, each according to his power of penetration and fancy. But that we may the better comprehend him in all the parts of this general view, let us extract from him a ſcheme of his religion.

He has a Jupiter, a father of Gods and men, to whom he applies ſeveral attributes, as wiſdom, juſtice, knowledge, power, etc. which are eſſentially inherent to the idea of a God. * He has given him two veſſels, out of which he diſtributes natural good or evil for the life of man: he places the Gods in council round him; he makes † prayers paſs to and fro before him; and mankind adore him with ſacrifice. But all this grand appearance, wherein poetry paid a deference to reaſon, is daſhed and mingled with the imperfection of our nature; not only with the applying our paſſions to the ſupreme being (for men have always been treated with this compliance to their notions) but that he is not even exempted from our common appetites and frailties: for he is made to eat, drink, and ſleep: But this his admirers would imagine to be only a groſſer way of repreſenting a general notion of happineſs, becauſe he ſays in one place, ‡ that the food of the Gods was not of the ſame nature with ours. But, upon the whole, while he endeavoured to ſpeak of a deity without a right information, he was forced to take him from that image he diſcovered in man; and (like one who being dazzled with the ſun in the heavens, would view him as he is reflected in a river) he has taken off the impreſſion not only ruffled with the emotion of our paſſions, but obſcured with the earthy mixture of our nature.

The other Gods have all their provinces aſſigned them; "Every thing has its peculiar deity, ſays "* Maximus Tyrius, by which Homer would inſinu-"ate that the Godhead was preſent to all things." When they are conſidered farther, we find he has turned the virtues and endowments of our minds into

* Iliad. 24. v. 527. † Il. 9. v. 498. ‡ Il. 5. v. 340.
* Maxim. Tyr. Diſſ. 16.

perſons,

perſons, to make the ſprings of action become viſible; and becauſe they are given by the Gods, he repreſents them as Gods themſelves deſcending from heaven. In the ſame ſtrong light he ſhows our vices, when they occaſion misfortunes, like extraordinary powers which inflict them upon us; and even our natural puniſhments are repreſented as puniſhers themſelves. But when we come to ſee the manner they are introduced in, they are found feaſting, fighting, wounded by men, and ſhedding a ſort of blood, in which his machines play a little too groſsly: the fable which was admitted to procure the pleaſure of ſurprize, violently oppreſſes the moral, and it may be loſt labour to ſearch for it in every minute circumſtance, if indeed it was intended to be there. The general ſtrokes are however philoſophical, the dreſs the poet's, which was uſed for convenience, and allowed to he ornamental. And ſomething ſtill may be offered in his defence, if he has both preſerved the grand moral from being obſcured, and adorned the parts of his works with ſuch ſentiments of the Gods as belonged to the age he lived in: which that he did, appears from his having then had that ſucceſs for which allegory was contrived. "It is the madneſs of men, ſays "† Maximus Tyrius, to diſeſteem what is plain, and "admire what is hidden; this the poets diſcovering, "invented the fable for a remedy, when they treated "of holy matters; which being more obſcure than "converſation, and more clear than the riddle, is a "mean between knowledge and ignorance; believed "partly for being agreeable, and partly for being "wonderful. Thus as poets in name, and philo-"ſophers in effect, they drew mankind gradually to "a ſcarch after truth, when the name of philoſopher "would have been harſh and diſpleaſing."

When Homer proceeds to tell us our duty to theſe ſuperior beings, we find prayer, ſacrifice, luſtration, and all the rites which were eſteemed religious, conſtantly recommended under fear of their diſpleaſure. We find too a notion of the ſoul's ſubſiſting after this

† Maxim. Tyr. Diſſ. 29.

life,

life, but for want of revelation he knows not what to reckon the happineſs of a future ſtate, to any one who was not deified; which is plain from the ſpeech of * Achilles to Ulyſſes, in the region of the dead; where he tells him, that "he would rather ſerve the "pooreſt creature upon earth, than rule over all the "departed." It was chiefly for this reaſon that Plato excluded him his commonwealth; he thought Homer ſpoke indecently of the Gods, and dreadfully of a future ſtate; but if he cannot be defended in every thing as a theologiſt, yet we may ſay, in reſpect of his poetry, that he has enriched it from theology with true ſentiments for profit; adorned it with allegories for pleaſure; and by uſing ſome machines which have no farther ſignificancy, or are ſo refined as to make it doubted if they have any, he has however produced that character in poetry which we call the *marvellous*, and from which the *agreeable*, (according to Ariſtotle) is always inſeparable.

If we take the ſtate of Greece at his time in a political view, we find it a † diſunited country, made up of ſmall ſtates; and whatever was managed in war amounted to no more than inteſtine ſkirmiſhes, or piracies abroad, which were eaſily revenged on account of their diſunion. Thus one people ſtole Europa, and another Io; the Grecians took Heſione from Troy, and the Trojans took Helena from Greece, in revenge. But this laſt having greater friends and alliances than any upon whom the rapes had hitherto fallen, the ruin of Troy was the conſequence; and the force of the Aſiatic coaſts was ſo broken, that this accident put a ſtop to the age of piracies. Then the inteſtine broils of Greece (which had been diſcontinued during the league) were renewed upon its diſſolution. War and ſedition moved people from place to place, during its want of inhabitants; exiles from one country was received for kings in another; and leaders took tracks of ground to beſtow them upon their followers. Commerce was neglected, living at home unſafe, and nothing of moment tranſ-

Politics.

* Odyſſ. 11. v. 488. † See Thucydides, lib. 1.

acted

acted by any but againſt their neighbours. Athens only, where the people were undiſturbed, becauſe it was a barren ſoil which no body coveted, had begun to ſend colonies abroad, being overſtocked with inhabitants.

Now a poem coming out at ſuch a time, with a moral capable of healing theſe diſorders by promoting union, we may reaſonably think it was deſigned for that end to which it is ſo peculiarly adapted. If we imagine therefore that Homer was a politician in this affair, we may ſuppoſe him to have looked back into the ages paſt, to ſee if at any time theſe diſorders had been leſs; and to have pitched upon that ſtory, wherein they found a temporary cure; that by celebrating it with all poſſible honour he might inſtil a deſire of the ſame ſort of union into the hearts of his countrymen. This indeed was a work which could belong to none but a poet, when governors had power only over ſmall territories, and the numerous governments were every way independent. It was then that all the charms of poetry were called forth, to inſinuate the important glory of an alliance; and the Iliad delivered as an oracle from the Muſes, with all the pomp of words and artificial influence. Union among themſelves was recommended, peace at home, and glory abroad: and leſt general precepts ſhould be rendered uſeleſs by miſapplications, he gives minute and particular leſſons concerning it: How when his kings quarrel, their ſubjects ſuffer; when they act in conjunction, victory attends them: Therefore when they meet in council, plans are drawn, and proviſions made for future action; and when in the field, the arts of war are deſcribed with the greateſt exactneſs. Theſe were lectures of a general concern to mankind, proper for the poet to deliver, and kings to attend to; ſuch as made Porphyry write of the profit that princes might receive from Homer; and Stratocles, Hermias, and Frontinus extract military diſcipline out of him. Thus tho' Plato has baniſhed him from one imaginary commonwealth, he has ſtill been ſerviceable to many real kingdoms.

The morality of Greece could not be perfect, while there was a natural weakneſs in its government; faults in politics are occaſioned by faults in ethics, and occaſion them in their turn The diviſion into ſo many ſtates was the riſe of frequent quarrels, whereby men were bred up in a rough untractable diſpoſition. Bodily ſtrength met with the greateſt honours, becauſe it was daily neceſſary to the ſubſiſtence of little governments, and that headlong courage which throws itſelf forward to enterprize and plunder, was univerſally careſſed, becauſe it carried all things before it. It is no wonder, in an age of ſuch education and cuſtoms, that, as * Thucydides ſays, "Robbing was honoured, provided "it were done with gallantry, and that the ancient "poets made people queſtion one another as they "ſailed by, *if they were thieves?* as a thing for which "no one ought either to be ſcorned or upbraided." Theſe were the ſort of actions which the ſingers then recorded, and it was out of ſuch an age that Homer was to take his ſubjects. For this reaſon (not a want of morality in him) we ſee a boaſting temper and unmanaged roughneſs in the ſpirit of his heroes, which ran out out in pride, anger, or cruelty. It is not in him as in our modern romances, where men are drawn in perfection, and we but read with a tender weakneſs what we can neither apply nor emulate. Homer writ for men, and therefore he writ of them; if the world had been better, he would have ſhewn it ſo; as the matter now ſtands, we ſee his people with the turn of his age, inſatiably thirſting after glory and plunder; for which however he has found them a lawful cauſe, and taken care to retard their ſucceſs by the intemperance of thoſe very appetites. *Morality.*

In the proſecution of the ſtory, every part of it has its leſſons of morality: There is brotherly love in Agamemnon and Menelaus, friendſhip in Achilles and Patroclus, and the love of his country in Hector. But ſince we have ſpoken of the Iliad as more particular for its politics, we may conſider the Odyſſey, as its

* Thucyd. lib 1.

moral

moral is moſt directly framed for ethics. It carries the hero through a world of trials both of the dangerous and pleaſurable nature. It ſhew him firſt under moſt ſurpriſing weights of adverſity, among ſhipwrecks and ſavages; all theſe he is made to paſs through, in the methods by which it becomes a man to conquer; a patience in ſuffering, and a preſence of mind in every accident. It ſhews him again in another view, tempted with the baits of idle or unlawful pleaſures; and then points out the methods of being ſafe from them. But if in general we conſider the care our author has taken to fix his leſſons of morality by the proverbs and precepts he delivers, we ſhall not wonder if Greece, which afterwards gave the appellation of *wiſe* to men who ſettled ſingle ſentences of truth, ſhould give him the title of the *father of virtue*, for introducing ſuch a number. To be brief, if we take the opinion of † Horace, he has propoſed him to us as a maſter of morality; he lays down the common philoſophical diviſion of good, into pleaſant, profitable, and honeſt; and then aſſerts that Homer has more fully and clearly inſtructed us in each of them, than the moſt rigid philoſophers.

Some indeed have thought, notwithſtanding all this, that Homer had only a deſign to pleaſe in his inventions; and that others have ſince extracted morals out of his ſtories (as indeed all ſtories are capable of being uſed ſo). But this is an opinion concerning poetry, which the world has rather degenerated into, than begun with. The traditions of Orpheus's civilizing mankind by moral poems, with others of the like nature, may ſhew there was a better uſe of the art both known and practiſed. There is alſo a remarkable paſſage of this kind in the third book of the Odyſſey, that Agamemnon left one of the * poets of thoſe times in his court when he ſailed for Troy; and that his queen was preſerved virtuous by ſongs, until Ægyſthus was

† Quid quid ſit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius et melius Chryſippo et Crantore dicit.
HOR. Ep. 2. l. 1.

* Odyſſ. 3. v. 267.

forced to expel him in order to debauch her. Here he has hinted what a true poetical ſpirit can do, when applied to the promotion of virtue; and from this one may judge he could not but deſign that himſelf, which he recomends as the duty and merit of his profeſſion. Others ſince his time may have ſeduced the art to worſe intentions; but they who are offended at the liberties of ſome poets, ſhould not condemn all in the groſs for trifling or corruption; eſpecially when the evidence runs ſo ſtrongly for any one, to the contrary.

We may in general go one to obſerve, that at the time when Homer was born, Greece did not abound in learning. For where-ever politics and morality are weak, learning] wants its peaceable air to thrive in. He has however introduced as much of their learning, and even of what he learned from Egypt, as the nature and compaſs of his work would admit. But that we may not miſtake the eulogies of thoſe ancients who call him the *father* of *arts* and *ſciences*, and be ſurpriſed to find ſo little of them (as they are now in perfection) in his works; we ſhould know that this character is not to be underſtood at large, as if he had included the full and regular ſyſtems of every thing: He is to be conſidered profeſſedly only in quality of a poet: this was his buſineſs, to which as whatever he knew was to be ſubſervient, ſo he has not failed to introduce thoſe ſtrokes of knowledge from the whole circle of arts and ſciences, which the ſubject demanded, either for neceſſity or ornament. And, ſecondly, it ſhould be obſerved, that many of thoſe notions, which his great genius drew only from nature and the truth of things, have been imagined to proceed from his acquaintance with arts and ſciences, invented long after; to which that they were applicable, was no wonder, ſince both his notions and thoſe ſciences were equally founded in truth and nature.

Hiſtory. Before his time there were no hiſtorians in Greece: he treated hiſtorically of paſt tranſactions, according as he could be informed by tradition, ſong, or whatever method there was of preſerving their memory. For this we have the conſent of Antiquity; they have generally more appealed

to

to his authority, and more inſiſted on it, than on the teſtimony of any other writer, when they treat of the rites, cuſtoms, and manners of the firſt times. They have generally believed that the acts of Tydeus at Thebes, the ſecond ſiege of that city, the ſettlement of Rhodes, the battle between the Curetes and the Ætolians, the ſucceſſion of the kings of Mycenæ by the ſceptre of Agamemnon, the acts of the Greeks at Troy, and many other ſuch accounts, are ſome of them wholly preſerved by him, and the reſt as faithfully related as by any hiſtorian. Nor perhaps was all of his invention which ſeems to be feigned, but rather frequently the obſcure traces and remains of real perſons and actions; which, as * Strabo obſerves, when hiſtory was tranſmitted by oral tradition, might be mixed with fable before it came into the hands of the poet. "This happened (ſays he) to Herodotus, the "firſt profeſſed hiſtorian, who is as fabulous as Ho-"mer when he refers to the common reports of coun-"tries; and it is not to be imputed to either as a "fault, but as a neceſſity of the times." Nay, the very paſſages which cauſe us to tax them at this diſtance with being fabulous, might be occaſioned by their diligence, and a fear of erring, if they too haſtily rejected thoſe reports which had paſſed current in the nations they deſcribed.

Geography.

Before his time there was no ſuch thing as geography in Greece. For this we have the ſuffrage of † Strabo, the beſt of geographers, who approves the opinion of Hipparchus and other ancients, that Homer was the very author of it; and upon this account begins his treatiſe of the ſcience itſelf, with an encomium on him. As to the general part of it, we find he had a knowledge of the earth's being ſurrounded with the ocean, becauſe he makes the ſun and ſtars both to riſe and ſet in it; and that he knew the uſe of the ſtars is plain from his making ‡ Ulyſſes ſail by the obſervation of them. But the inſtance oftenеſt alledged upon this point is the ‖ ſhield of Achil-

* Strabo, lib. 1. † Strabo, ibid. initio. ‡ Odyſſ. l. 5. v. 272. ‖ Iliad. 18. v. 482, etc.

les; where he places the earth encompaſſed with the ſea, and gives the ſtars the names they are yet known by, as the Hyades, Pleiades, the Bear, and Orion. By the three firſt of theſe he repreſents the conſtellations of the northern region; and in the laſt he gives a ſingle repreſentative of the ſouthern, to which (as it were a counterbalance) he adds a title of greatneſs, οὖρος Ὠρίωνος. Then he tells us that the Bear, or ſtars of the arctic circle, never diſappear; as an obſervation which agrees with no other. And if to this we add (what Eratoſthenes thought he meant) that the five plates which were faſtened on the ſhield, divided it by the lines where they met, into the five zones, it will appear an original deſign of globes and ſpheres. In the particular parts of geography his knowledge is entirely inconteſtable. Strabo refers to him upon all occaſions, allowing that he knew the extremes of the earth, ſome of which he names, and others he deſcribes by ſigns as the fortunate iſlands. The ſame * author takes notice of his accounts concerning the ſeveral ſoils, plants, animals and cuſtoms; as Egypt's being fertile of medicinal herbs; Lybia's fruitfulneſs, where the ewes have horns, and yean thrice a-year, &c. which are knowledges that make geography more various and profitable. But what all have agreed to celebrate is his deſcription of Greece, which had laws made for its prervation, and conteſts between governments decided by its authority: which † Strabo acknowledges to have no epithet, or ornamental expreſſion for any place, that is not drawn from its nature, quality, or circumſtances; and profeſſes (after ſo long an interval) to deviate from it only where the country had undergone alterations, that caſt the deſcriptions into obſcurity.

Rhetoric. In his time rhetoric was not known: that art took its riſe out of poetry, which was not till then eſtabliſhed. "The oratorial elocution "(ſays ‡ Strabo) is but an imitation of the poetical; "this appeared firſt and was approved: they who i- "mitated it, took off the meaſures, but ſtill preſerved

* Strabo, l. 1. † Strabo, l. 8. ‡ Strabo, l. 1.

"all

" all the other parts of poetry in their writings; ſuch " were Cadmus the Mileſian, Pherecydes, and Heca- " tæus. Then their followers took ſomething more " from what was left, and at laſt elocution deſcended " into the proſe which is now among us." But if rhetoric is owing to poetry, the obligation is ſtill more due to Homer. He (as * Quintilian tells us) gave both the pattern and riſe to all parts of it. " Hic " omnibus eloquentiæ partibus exemplum et ortum " dedit: Hunc nemo in magnis rebus ſublimitatæ, " in parvis proprietatæ, ſuperavit. Idem lætus et " preſſus, jucundus et gravis, tum copia tum brevita- " te admirabilis, nec poetica modo ſed oratoria virtu- " te eminentiſſimus." From him therefore they who ſettled the art found it proper to deduce the rules, which was eaſily done, when they had divided their obſervations into the kinds and the ornaments of elocution. For the kinds, the " ancients (ſays † A. " Gell.) ſettled them according to the three which " they obſerve in his principal ſpeakers; his Ulyſſes, " who is magnificent and flowing; his Menelaus, who " is ſhort and cloſe; and his Neſtor, who is moderate " and diſpaſſioned, and has a kind of middle elo- " quence participating of both the former." And for the ornaments, ‡ Ariſtotle, the great maſter of the rhetoricians, ſhews what deference is due to Homer, when he orders the orator to lay down his heads, and expreſs both the manners and affections of his work, with an imitation of that diction, and thoſe figures, which the divine Homer excelled in. This is the conſtant language of thoſe who ſucceeded him, and the opinion ſo far prevailed as to make § Quintilian obſerve, that they who have written concerning the art of ſpeaking, take from Homer moſt of the inſtances of their ſimilitudes, amplifications, examples, digreſſions, and arguments.

As to natural philoſophy, the age was not arrived when the Greeks cultivated and reduced into ſyſtem the principles of it which they learned from Egypt: yet *Natural philoſophy.*

* Qui t.l. l. 10. † Aulus Gell. l. 7. cap. 14. ‡ Ariſt. Topic. § Politian. Præfatio in Hom.

we

we ſee many of theſe principles delivered up and down in his work. But as this is a branch of learning which does not lie much in the way of a poet who ſpeaks of heroes and wars; the deſire to prove his knowledge this way, has only run * Politian and others into trifling inferences; as when they would have it that he underſtood the ſecrets of philoſophy, becauſe he mentions ſun, rain, wind, and thunder. The moſt plauſible way of making out his knowledge in this kind, is by ſuppoſing he couched it in allegories: and that he ſometimes uſed the names of the gods as his terms for the elements, as the chymiſts now uſe them for metals. But in applying this to him, we muſt tread very carefully; not ſearching for allegory too induſtriouſly, where the paſſage may inſtruct by example; and endeavouring rather to find the fable an ornament to plain truths, than to make it a cover to curious and unknown problems.

Phyſic. As for medicine, ſomething of it muſt have been underſtood in that age; though in Greece it was ſo far from perfection, that what concerned diet was invented long after by Hippocrates. The accidents of life make the ſearch after remedies too indiſpenſable a duty to be neglected at any time. Accordingly he † tells us, that the Egyptians, who had many medicinal plants in their country, were all phyſicians; and perhaps he might have learnt his own ſkill from his acquaintance with that nation. The ſtate of war which Greece had lived in, required a knowledge in the healing of wounds: and this might make him breed his princes, Achilles, Patroclus, Podalirius, and Machaon, to the ſcience. What Homer thus attributes to others, he knew himſelf, and he has given us reaſon to believe, not ſlightly. For if we conſider his inſight into the ſtructure of the human body, it is ſo nice, that he has been judged by ſome to have wounded his heroes with too much ſcience: or if we obſerve his cure of wounds, which are the accidents proper to an epic poem, we find him directing the chirurgical operation, ſometimes ‡ infuſing lenitives,

* P l.t. Præf. in Hom. † Odyſſ. l. 4. v. 231. ‡ Il. 4. v. 218. and Il. 11. in fine.

and

and at other times bitter powders, when the effuſion of blood required aſtringent qualities.

Statuary.

For ſtatuary, it appears by the accounts of Egypt and the Palladium, that there was enough of it very early in the world for thoſe images which were required in the worſhip of their Gods; but there are none mentioned as valuable in Greece ſo early, nor was the art eſtabliſhed on its rules before Homer. He found it agreeable to the worſhip in uſe, and neceſſary for his machinery, that his Gods ſhould be clothed in bodies; wherefore he took care to give them ſuch as carried the utmoſt perfection of the human form; and diſtinguiſhed them from each other even in this ſuperior beauty, with ſuch marks as were agreeable to each of the deities. "This, ſays * Strabo, awakened the conceptions of "the moſt eminent ſtatuaries, while they ſtrove to "keep up the grandeur of that idea, which Homer "had impreſſed upon the imagination, as we read of "Phidias concerning their ſtatue of Jupiter." And becauſe they copied their Gods from him in their beſt performances, his deſcriptions became the characters which were afterwards purſued in all works of good taſte. Hence came the common ſaying of the ancients, "That either Homer was the only man who "had ſeen the forms of the Gods, or the only one "who had ſhewn them to men;" a paſſage which † Madam Dacier wreſts to prove the truth of his theology, different from Strabo's acceptation of it.

There are, beſides what we have ſpoken of, other ſciences pretended to be found in him. Thus Macrobius diſcovers that the chain with which ‡ Jupiter ſays he could lift the world, is a metaphyſical notion, that means a connexion of all things from the Supreme Being to the meaneſt part of the creation. Others, to prove him ſkilful in judicial aſtrology, bring a quotation concerning the births of ‖ Hector and Polydamas on the ſame night; who were nevertheleſs of different qualifications, one excelling in war, and the other in

* Strabo, l. 8. † Dacier, Preface to Homer. ‡ Il. 8. v. 19. Vid. Macrob. de ſomn. Scip. l. 1. c. 14. ‖ Il. 18. v. 252.

eloquence:

eloquence: others again will have him to be verſed in magic, from his ſtories concerning Circe. Theſe and many of the like nature are interpretations ſtrained or trifling, ſuch as are not wanted for a proof of Homer's learning, and by which we contribute nothing to raiſe his character, while we ſacrifice our judgment in the eyes of others.

It is ſufficient to have gone thus far, in ſhewing he was the father of learning, a ſoul capable of ranging over the whole creation with an intellectual view, ſhining alone in an age of obſcurity, and ſhining beyond thoſe who have had the advantage of more learned ages; leaving behind him a work not only adorned with all the knowledge of his own time, but in which he has before-hand broken up the fountains of ſeveral ſciences which were brought nearer to perfection by poſterity: A work which ſhall always ſtand at the top of the ſublime character, to be gazed at by readers with an admiration of its perfection, and by writers with a deſpair that it ſhould ever be emulated with ſucceſs.

THE

THE ILIAD.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The contention of Achilles and Agamemnon.

IN the war of Troy, the Greeks having ſacked ſome of the neighbouring towns, and taken from thence two beautiful captives, Chryſeis and Briſeis, allotted the firſt to Agamemnon, and the laſt to Achilles. Chryſes, the father of Chryſeis, and prieſt of Apollo, comes to the Grecian camp to ranſom her; with which the action of the poem opens, in the tenth year of the ſiege. The prieſt being refuſed and inſolently diſmiſſed by Agamemnon, intreats for vengeance from his God, who inflicts a peſtilence on the Greeks. Achilles calls a council, and encourages Chalcas to declare the cauſe of it, who attributes it to the refuſal of Chryſeis. The king being obliged to ſend back his captive, enters into a furious conteſt with Achilles, which Neſtor paciſies; however, as he had the abſolute command of the army, he ſeizes on Briſeis in revenge. Achilles in diſcontent withdraws himſelf and his forces from the reſt of the Greeks; and complaining to Thetis, ſhe ſupplicates Jupiter to render them ſenſible of the wrong done to her ſon, by giving victory to the Trojans. Jupiter granting her ſuit incenſes Juno, between whom the debate runs high, till they are reconciled by the addreſs of Vulcan.

The time of two and twenty days is taken up in this book; nine during the plague, one in the council and quarrel of the princes, and twelve for Jupiter's ſtay with the Ethiopians, at whoſe return Thetis prefers her petition. The ſcene lies in the Grecian camp, then changes to Chryſa, and laſtly to Olympus.

ACHILLES'

ACHILLES' wrath, to Greece the direful ſpring
Of woes unnumber'd, heav'nly Goddeſs ſing!
That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign
The ſouls of mighty chiefs untimely ſlain;
Whoſe

NOTES.

IT is ſomething ſtrange, that of all the commentators upon Homer, there is hardly one whoſe principal deſign is to illuſtrate the poetical beauties of the author. They are voluminous in explaining thoſe ſciences which he made but ſubſervient to his poetry, and ſparing only upon that art which conſtitutes his character. This has been occaſioned by the oſtentation of men who had more reading than taſte, and were fonder of ſhewing their variety of learning in all kinds, than their ſingle underſtanding in poetry. Hence it comes to paſs, that their remarks are rather philoſophical, hiſtorical, geographical, allegorical, or in ſhort rather any thing than critical and poetical. Even the grammarians, tho' their whole buſineſs and uſe be only to render the works of an author intelligible, are ſtrangely touched with the pride of doing ſomething more than they ought. The grand ambition of one ſort of ſcholars is to increaſe the number of various lections; which they have done to ſuch a degree of obſcure diligence, that (as Sir H. Savil obſerved) we now begin to value the firſt editions of books as moſt correct, becauſe they have been leaſt corrected. The prevailing paſſion of others is to diſcover new meanings in the author, whom they will cauſe to appear myſterious, purely for the vanity of being thought to unravel him. Theſe account it a diſgrace to be of the opinion of thoſe that preceded them; and it is generally the fate of ſuch people who will never ſay what was ſaid before, to ſay what will never be ſaid after them. If they can but find a word, that has once been ſtrained by ſome dark writer, to ſignify any thing different from its uſual acceptation; it is frequent with them to apply it conſtantly to that uncommon meaning, whenever they meet it in a clear writer: for reading is ſo much dearer to them than ſenſe, that they will diſcard it at any time to make way for a criticiſm. In other places where they cannot conteſt the truth of the common interpretation, they get themſelves room for diſſertation by imaginary amphibologies, which they will have to be deſigned by the author. This diſpoſition of finding out different ſignifications in one thing, may be the effect of either too much, or too little wit: for men of a right underſtanding

Whoſe limbs unbury'd on the naked ſhore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore:

Since

ing generally ſee at once all that an author can reaſonably mean, but others are apt to fancy two meanings for want of knowing one. Not to add, that there is a vaſt deal of difference between the learning of a critic, and the puzzling of a grammarian.

It is no eaſy taſk to make ſomething out of a hundred pedants that is not pedantical; yet this he muſt do, who would give a tolerable abſtract of the former expoſitors of Homer. The commentaries of Euſtathius are indeed an immenſe treaſury of the Greek learning; but as he ſeems to have amaſſed the ſubſtance of whatever others had written upon the author, ſo he is not free from ſome of the foregoing cenſures. There are thoſe who have ſaid, that a judicious abſtract of him alone, might furniſh out ſufficient illuſtrations upon Homer. It was reſolved to take the trouble of reading through that voluminous work, and the reader may be aſſured, thoſe remarks that any way concern the poetry, or art of the poet, are much fewer than is imagined. The greater part of theſe is already plundered by ſucceeding commentators, who have very little but what they owe to him: and I am obliged to ſay even of Madam Dacier, that ſhe is either more beholden to him than ſhe has confeſſed, or has read him leſs than ſhe is willing to own. She has made a farther attempt than her predeceſſors to diſcover the beauties of the poet; though we have often only her general praiſes, and exclamations inſtead of reaſons. But her remarks all together are the moſt judicious collection extant of the ſcattered obſervations of the ancients and moderns, as her preface is excellent, and her tranſlation equally careful and elegant.

The chief deſign of the following notes is to comment upon Homer as a poet; to explain obſcure paſſages; and give ſuch hiſtorical and geographical obſervations, as are neceſſary for an Engliſh reader.

THE plan of this poem is formed upon anger and its ill effects; the plan of Virgil's upon pious reſignation and its rewards; and thus every paſſion or virtue may be the foundation of the ſcheme of an epic poem. This diſtinction between two authors who have been ſo ſucceſsful, ſeemed neceſſary to be taken notice of, that they who would imitate either may not ſtumble at the very entrance, or ſo curb their imaginations, as to deprive us of noble morals told in a new variety of accidents. Imitation does not hinder invention: We may obſerve the rules of nature, and write in the ſpirit of thoſe who have beſt hit upon them; without taking the ſame track, be-

Since great Achilles and Atrides ſtrove,
Such was the ſov'reign doom, and ſuch the will of Jove.
Declare, O Muſe! in what ill-fated hour
Sprung the fierce ſtrife, from what offended pow'r?
Latona's ſon, a dire contagion ſpread,
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead;
The king of men his rev'rend prieſt defy'd,
And for the king's offence the people dy'd.
For Chryſes ſought with coſtly gifts to gain
His captive daughter from the victor's chain.
Suppliant the venerable father ſtands,
Apollo's awful enſigns grace his hands:
By theſe he begs: and lowly bending down,
Extends the ſceptre and the laurel crown.

ginning in the ſame manner, and following the main of their ſtory almoſt ſtep by ſtep; as moſt of the modern writers of epic poetry have done after one of theſe great poets.

Ver. 8. *Will of Jove.*] Plutarch, in his treatiſe of reading poets, interprets Διὸς in this place to ſignify *Fate*, not imagining it conſiſtent with the goodneſs of the Supreme Being, or Jupiter, to contrive or practiſe any evil againſt men. Euſtathius makes *Will* here to refer to the promiſe which Jupiter gave to Thetis, that he would honour her ſon by ſiding with Troy while he ſhould be abſent. But to reconcile theſe two opinions, perhaps the meaning may be, that when Fate had decreed the deſtruction of Troy, Jupiter having the power of incidents to bring it to paſs, fulfilled that decree by providing means for it. So that the words may thus ſpecify the time of action, from the beginning of the poem, in which thoſe incidents worked, till the promiſe to Thetis was fulfilled, and the deſtruction of Troy aſcertained to the Greeks by the death of Hector.

Ver. 11. *Latona's ſon.*] Here the author, who firſt invoked the Muſe as the Goddeſs of memory, vaniſhes from the reader's view, and leaves her to relate the whole affair through the poem, whoſe preſence from this time diffuſes an air of majeſty over the relation. And leſt this ſhould be loſt to our thoughts in the continuation of the ſtory, he ſometimes refreſhes them with a new invocation at proper intervals. Euſtathius.

Ver. 20. *The ſceptre and the laurel crown.*] There is ſomething exceedingly venerable in this appearance of the prieſt.]

He

He ſu'd to all, but chief implor'd for grace
The brother-kings, of Atreus' royal race.
Ye kings and warriors! may your vows be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground.
May Jove reſtore you, when your toils are o'er,
Safe to the pleaſures of your native ſhore.
But oh! relieve a wretched parent's pain,
And give Chryſeis to theſe arms again;
If mercy fail, yet let my preſents move,
And dread avenging Phœbus, ſon of Jove.
The Greeks in ſhouts their joint aſſent declare,
The prieſt to rev'rence, and releaſe the fair.
Not ſo Atrides; He, with kingly pride,
Repuls'd the ſacred fire, and thus reply'd.
Hence on thy life, and fly theſe hoſtile plains,
Nor aſk, preſumptuous, what the king detains;
Hence, with thy laurel crown, and golden rod,
Nor truſt too far thoſe enſigns of thy God.

Ver. 23. *Ye kings and warriors.*] The art of this ſpeech is remarkable. Chryſes conſiders the conſtitution of the Greeks before Troy, as made up of troops partly from kingdoms and partly from democracies: wherefore he begins with a diſtinction which comprehends all. After this, as Apollo's prieſt, he prays that they may obtain the two bleſſings they had moſt in view, the conqueſt of Troy, and a ſafe return. Then as he names his petition, he offers an extraordinary ranſom; and concludes with bidding them fear the God if they refuſe it; like one who from his office ſeems to foreſee their miſery, and exhorts them to ſhun it. Thus he endeavours to work by the art of a general application, by religion, by intereſt, and the inſinuation of danger.

Ver. 33. *He with pride repuls'd.*] It has been remarked in honour of Homer's judgment, and the care he took of his reader's morals, that where he ſpeaks of evil actions committed, or hard words given, he generally characteriſes them as ſuch by a previous expreſſion. This paſſage is given as one inſtance of it, where he ſays the repulſe of Chryſes was a proud injurious action in Agamemnon: and it may be remarked, that before his heroes treat one another with hard language in this book, he ſtill takes care to let us know they were under a diſtraction of anger. Plutarch, of reading poets.

Mine is thy daughter, prieſt, and ſhall remain;
And pray'rs, and tears, and bribes ſhall plead in vain;
Till time ſhall riſle ev'ry youthful grace,
And age diſmiſs her from my cold embrace,
In daily labours of the loom employ'd,
Or doom'd to deck the bed ſhe once enjoy'd.
Hence then; to Argos ſhall the maid retire,
Far from her native ſoil, and weeping ſire.
The trembling prieſt along the ſhore return'd,
And in the anguiſh of a father mourn'd.
Diſconſolate, not daring to complain,
Silent he wander'd by the ſounding main:
Till, ſafe at diſtance, to his God he prays,
The God who darts around the world his rays.
O Smintheus! ſprung from fair Latona's line,
Thou guardian pow'r of Cilla the divine,
Thou ſource of light! whom Tenedos adores,
And whoſe bright preſence gilds thy Chryſa's ſhores:
If e'er with wreaths I hung thy ſacred fane,
Or fed the flames with fat of oxen ſlain;
God of the ſilver bow! thy ſhafts employ,
Avenge thy ſervant, and the Greeks deſtroy.
Thus Chryſes pray'd: the fav'ring pow'r attends,
And from Olympus' lofty tops deſcends.
Bent was his bow, the Grecian hearts to wound;
Fierce as he mov'd, his ſilver ſhafts reſound.

Ver. 41. *Till time ſhall riſle ev'ry youthful grace,*
And age diſmiſs her from my cold embrace,
In daily labours of the loom employ'd,
Or doom'd to deck the bed ſhe once enjoy'd.]

The Greek is ἐντιθέμεναι, which ſignifies either *making* the bed, or *partaking* it. Euſtathius and Madam Dacier inſiſt very much upon its being taken in the former ſenſe only, for fear of preſenting a looſe idea to the reader, and of offending againſt the modeſty of the Muſe, who is ſuppoſed to relate the poem.

Ver. 47. *The trembling prieſt.*] We may take notice here, once for all, that Homer is frequently eloquent in his very ſilence.

Breathing

Breathing revenge, a ſudden night he ſpread;
And gloomy darkneſs roll'd around his head.
The fleet in view, he twang'd his deadly bow,
And hiſſing fly the feather'd fates below.
On mules and dogs th' infection firſt began;
And laſt the vengeful arrows fix'd in man.
For nine long nights, thro' all the duſky air
The Pyres thick flaming ſhot a diſmal glare.
But ere the tenth revolving day was run,
Inſpir'd by Juno, Thetis' god-like ſon
Conven'd to council all the Grecian train;
For much the Goddeſs mourn'd her heroes ſlain.

Ver. 67. *He bent his deadly bow.*] In the tenth year of the ſiege of Troy, a plague happened in the Grecian camp, occaſioned perhaps by immoderate heats and groſs exhalations. At the introduction of this accident Homer begins his poem, and takes occaſion from it to open the ſcene of action with a moſt beautiful allegory. He ſuppoſes that ſuch afflictions are ſent from heaven for the puniſhment of our evil actions; and becauſe the ſun was a principal inſtrument of it, he ſays it was ſent to puniſh Agamemnon for deſpiſing that God, and injuring his prieſt. Euſtathius.

Ver. 69. *Mules and dogs.*] Hippocrates obſerves two things of plagues; that their cauſe is in the air; and that different animals are differently touched by them, according to their nature or nouriſhment. This philoſophy Spondanus refers to the plague here mentioned. Firſt, the cauſe is in the air, by reaſon of the darts or beams of Apollo. Secondly, the mules and dogs are ſaid to die ſooner than the men; partly becauſe they have by nature a quickneſs of ſmell, which makes the infection ſooner perceivable; and partly by the nouriſhment they take; their feeding on the earth with prone heads making the exhalation more eaſy to be ſucked in with it. Thus has Hippocrates, ſo long after Homer writ, ſubſcribed to his knowledge in the riſe and progreſs of this diſtemper.

Ver. 74. *Thetis' god-like ſon convenes a council.*] On the tenth day a council is held to inquire why the Gods were angry. Plutarch obſerves, how juſtly he applies the characters of his perſons to the incidents; not making Agamemnon but Achilles call this council, who of all the kings was moſt capable of making obſervations upon the plague, and of foreſeeing its duration, as having been bred by Chiron to the ſtudy of phyſic.

Th' aſſembly ſeated, riſing o'er the reſt,
Achilles thus the king of men addreſt.
Why leave we not the fatal Trojan ſhore,
And meaſure back the ſeas we croſt before?
The plague deſtroying whom the ſword would ſpare,
'Tis time to ſave the few remains of war.
But let ſome prophet, or ſome ſacred ſage,
Explore the cauſe of great Apollo's rage;
Or learn the waſteful vengeance to remove,
By myſtic dreams, for dreams deſcend from Jove.
If broken vows this heavy curſe have laid,
Let altars ſmoke, and hecatombs be paid,
So heav'n aton'd ſhall dying Greece reſtore,
And Phœbus dart his burning ſhafts no more.
He ſaid, and ſat: when Chalcas thus reply'd:
Chalcas the wiſe, the Grecian prieſt and guide,
That ſacred ſeer, whoſe comprehenſive view
The paſt, the preſent, and the future knew:
Upriſing ſlow, the venerable ſage
Thus ſpoke the prudence and the fears of age.
Belov'd of Jove, Achilles! would'ſt thou know
Why angry Phœbus bends his fatal bow?

First

Ver. 79. *Why leave we not the fatal Trojan ſhore,* etc.] The artifice of this ſpeech according to Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, is admirably carried on to open an accuſation againſt Agamemnon, whom Achilles ſuſpects to be the cauſe of all their miſeries. He directs himſelf not to the aſſembly, but to Agamemnon; he names not only the plague, but the war too, as having exhauſted them all, which was evidently due to his family. He leads the Augurs he would conſult, by pointing at ſomething lately done with reſpect to Apollo. And while he continues within the guard of civil expreſſion, ſcattering his inſinuations, he encourages thoſe who may have more knowledge to ſpeak out boldly, by letting them ſee there is a party made for their ſafety; which has its effect immediately in the following ſpeech of Chalcas, whoſe demand of protection ſhows upon whom the offence is to be placed.

Ver. 97. *Belov'd of Jove, Achilles!*] Theſe appellations of praiſe and honour, with which the heroes in Homer ſo frequently

First give thy faith, and plight a prince's word
Of sure protection, by thy pow'r and sword.
For I must speak what wisdom would conceal,
And truths, invidious to the great, reveal.
Bold is the task, when subjects grown too wise,
Instruct a monarch where his error lies;
For tho' we deem the short-liv'd fury past,
'Tis sure, the mighty will revenge at last.
To whom Pelides. From thy inmost soul
Speak what thou know'st, and speak without controul.
Ev'n by that God I swear, who rules the day,
To whom thy hands the vows of Greece convey,
And whose blest oracles thy lips declare;
Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,
No daring Greek of all the num'rous band,
Against his priest shall lift an impious hand:
Not ev'n the chief by whom our hosts are led,
The king of kings, shall touch that sacred head.

ly salute each other, were agreeable to the style of the ancient times, as appears from several of the like nature in the scripture. Milton has not been wanting to give his poem this cast of antiquity, throughout which our first parents almost always accost each other with some title, that expresses a respect to the dignity of human nature.

Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve———
Adam, earth's hallow'd mould of God inspir'd.———
Offspring of heaven and earth, and all earth's Lord, etc.

Ver. 115. *Not ev'n the chief.*] After Achilles had brought in Chalcas by his dark doubts concerning Agamemnon, Chalcas who perceived them, and was unwilling to be the first that named the king, artfully demands a protection in such a manner, as confirms those doubts, and extorts from Achilles this warm and particular expression: "That he would protect him even against Agamenon," (who, as he says, is now the greatest man of Greece, to hint that at the expiration of the war he should be again reduced to be barely king of Mycenæ.) This place Plutarch takes notice of as the first in which Achilles shews his contempt of soverign authority.

Encou-

Encourage'd thus, the blameleſs man replies;
Nor vows unpaid, nor ſlighted ſacrifice,
But he, our chief, provok'd the raging peſt,
Apollo's vengeance for his injur'd prieſt.
Nor will the God's awaken'd fury ceaſe,
But plagues ſhall ſpread, and fun'ral fires increaſe,
Till the great king, without a ranſom paid,
To her own Chryſa ſend the black-ey'd maid.
Perhaps, with added ſacrifice and pray'r,
The prieſt may pardon, and the God may ſpare.
The prophet ſpoke; when with a gloomy frown
The monarch ſtarted from his ſhining throne;
Black choler fill'd his breaſt that boil'd with ire,
And from his eye-balls flaſh'd the living fire.
Augur accurſt! denouncing miſchief ſtill;
Prophet of plagues, for ever boding ill!
Still muſt that tongue ſome wounding meſſage bring,
And ſtill thy prieſtly pride provoke thy king?
For this are Phœbus' oracles explor'd,
To teach the Greeks to murmur at their lord?
For this with falſhoods is my honour ſtain'd;
Is heav'n offended, and a prieſt profan'd,
Becauſe my prize, my beauteous maid I hold,
And heav'nly charms prefer to proffer'd gold?
A maid, unmatch'd in manners as in face,
Skill'd in each art, and crown'd with ev'ry grace.

Ver. 131. *Augur accurſt.*] This, and the two following lines, are in a manner repetitions of the ſame thing thrice over. It is left to the reader to conſider how far it may be allowed, or rather praiſed for a beauty, when we conſider with Euſtathius that it is a moſt natural effect of anger to be full of words, and inſiſting on that which galls us. We may add, that theſe reiterated expreſſions might be ſuppoſed to be thrown out one after another, as Agamemnon is ſtruck in the confuſion of his paſſion, firſt by the remembrance of one prophecy, and then of another, which the ſame man had uttered againſt him.

Not

Not half ſo dear were Clytæmneſtra's charms,
When firſt her blooming beauties bleſt my arms.
Yet if the Gods demand her, let her ſail;
Our cares are only for the public weal:
Let me be deem'd the hateful cauſe of all,
And ſuffer, rather than my people fall.
The prize, the beauteous prize I will reſign
So dearly valu'd, and ſo juſtly mine.
But ſince for common good I yeild the fair,
My private loſs let grateful Greece repair;
Nor unrewarded let your prince complain,
That he alone has fought and bled in vain.
Inſatiate king (Achilles thus replies)
Fond of the pow'r, but fonder of the prize!
Would'ſt

Ver. 143. *Not half ſo dear were Clytæmneſtra's charms.*] Agamemnon having heard the charge which Chalcas drew up againſt him in two particulars, that he had affronted the prieſt, and refuſed to reſtore his daughter; he offers one anſwer which gives ſoftening colours to both, that he loved her as well as his queen Clytæmneſtra, for her perfections. Thus he would ſeem to ſatisfy the father by kindneſs to his daughter, to excuſe himſelf before the Greeks for what is paſt, and to make a merit of yeilding her and ſacrificing his paſſion for their ſafety.

Ver. 155. *Inſatiate King*] Here, where this paſſion of anger grows loud, it ſeems proper to prepare the reader, and prevent his miſtake in the character of Achilles, which might ſhock him in ſeveral particulars following. We ſhould know that the poet rather ſtudied nature than perfection, in the laying down his characters. He reſolved to ſing the conſequences of anger; he conſidered what virtues and vices would conduce moſt to bring his moral out of the fable; and artfully diſpoſed them in his chief perſons after the manner in which we generally find them; making the fault which moſt peculiarly attends any good quality, to reſide with it. Thus he has placed pride with magnanimity in Agamemnon, and craft with prudence in Ulyſſes. And thus we muſt take his Achilles, not as a mere heroic diſpaſſioned character, but as compounded of courage and anger; one who finds himſelf almoſt invincible, and aſſumes an uncontrouled carriage upon the ſelf-

Would'ſt thou the Greeks their lawful prey ſhould yeild,
The due reward of many a well fought field?
The ſpoils of cities raz'd, and warriors ſlain,
We ſhare with juſtice, as with toil we gain:
But to reſume whate'er thy av'rice craves,
(That trick of tyrants) may be borne by ſlaves.
Yet if our chief for plunder only fight,
The ſpoils of Ilion ſhall thy loſs requite,
Whene'er, by Jove's decree, our conquering pow'rs
Shall humble to the duſt her lofty tow'rs.
Then thus the king. Shall I my prize reſign
With tame content, and thou poſſeſt of thine?
Great as thou art, and like a God in fight,
Think not to rob me of a ſoldier's right.
At thy demand ſhall I reſtore the maid?
Firſt let the juſt equivalent be paid;
Such as a king might aſk; and let it be
A treaſure worthy her, and worthy me.
Or grant me this, or with a monarch's claim
This hand ſhall ſeize ſome other captive dame.

ſelf-conſciouſneſs of his worth; whoſe high ſtrain of honour will not ſuffer him to betray his friends, or fight againſt them, even when he thinks they have affronted him; but whoſe inexorable reſentment will not let him hearken to any terms of accomodation.

Ver. 172. *Firſt let the juſt equivalent.*] The reaſoning in point of right between Achilles and Agamemnon ſeems to be this. Achilles pleads that Agamemnon could not ſeize upon any other man's captive without a new diſtribution, it being an invaſion of private property. On the other hand, as Agamemnon's power was limited, how came it that all the Grecian captains would ſubmit to an illegal and arbitrary action? I think the legal pretence for his ſeizing Briſeis muſt have been founded upon that law, whereby the commander in chief had the power of taking what part of the prey he pleaſed for his own uſe: and he being obliged to reſtore what he had taken, it ſeemed but juſt that he ſhould have a ſecond choice.

The

The mighty Ajax ſhall his prize reſign,
Ulyſſes' ſpoils, or ev'n thy own be mine.
The man who ſuffers, loudly may complain;
And rage he may, but he ſhall rage in vain.
But this when time requires——It now remains
We launch a bark to plow the watry plains,
And waft the ſacrifice to Chryſa's ſhores,
With choſen pilots, and with lab'ring oars.
Soon ſhall the fair the ſable ſhip aſcend,
And ſome deputed prince the charge attend;
This Creta's king, or Ajax ſhall fulfill,
Or wiſe Ulyſſes ſee perform'd our will;
Or, if our royal pleaſure ſhall ordain,
Achilles' ſelf conduct her o'er the main;
Let fierce Achilles, dreaful in his rage,
The God propitiate, and the peſt aſſuage.
At this, Pelides frowning ſtern, reply'd:
O tyrant arm'd with inſolence and pride!
Inglorious ſlave to in'reſt, ever join'd
With fraud, unworthy of a royal mind!
What gen'rous Greek, obedient to thy word,
Shall form an ambuſh, or ſhall lift the ſword?
What cauſe have I to war at thy decree?
Th' diſtant Trojans never injur'd me:
To Phthia's realms no hoſtile troops they led,
Safe in her vales my warlike courſers fed;
Far hence removed, the hoarſe-reſounding main,
And walls of rocks, ſecure my native reign,
Whoſe fruitful ſoil luxuriant harveſts grace,
Rich in her fruits, and in her martial race.
Hither we ſail'd, a voluntary throng,
T' avenge a private, not a public wrong:
What elſe to Troy, th' aſſembled nations draws,
But thine, ungrateful, and thy brother's cauſe?
Is this the pay our blood and toils deſerve,
Diſgrace'd and injur'd by the man we ſerve?

And

Juſt as in anguiſh of ſuſpence he ſtay'd,
While half unſheath'd appear'd the glitt'ring blade,
Minerva ſwift deſcended from above,
Sent by the * ſiſter and the wife of Jove;
(For both the princes claim'd her equal care)
Behind ſhe ſtood, and by the golden hair
Achilles ſeiz'd; to him alone conſeſt;
A ſable cloud conceal'd her from the reſt.
He ſees, and ſudden to the goddeſs cries,
Known by the flames that ſparkle from her eyes.
Deſcends Minerva, in her guardian care,
A heavenly witneſs of the wrongs I bear
From Atreus' ſon? Then let thoſe eyes that view
The daring crime behold the vengeance too.
Forbear! (the progeny of Jove replies)
To calm thy fury I forſake the ſkies:
Let great Achilles, to the Gods reſign'd,
To reaſon yield the empire o'er his mind.
By awful Juno this command is giv'n;
The king and you are both the care of heav'n.
The force of keen reproaches let him feel,
But ſheath, obedient, thy revenging ſteel.
For I pronounce (and truſt a heav'nly pow'r)
Thy injur'd honour has its fated hour,
When the proud monarch ſhall thy arms implore,
And bribe thy friendſhip with a boundleſs ſtore.

Ver. 261. *Minerva ſwift deſcended from above.*] Homer having by degrees raiſed Achilles to ſuch a pitch of fury, as to make him capable of attempting Agamemnon's life in the council, Pallas the Goddeſs of wiſdom deſcends, and being ſeen only by him, pulls him back in the very inſtant of execution. He parleys with her a while, as imagining ſhe would adviſe him to proceed, but upon the promiſe of ſuch a time wherein there ſhould be a full reparation of his honour, he ſheathes his ſword in obedience to her. She aſcends to heaven, and he being left to himſelf, falls again upon his general with bitter expreſſions.

* Juno.

Then

Then let revenge no longer bear the ſway,
Command thy paſſions, and the Gods obey.
To her Pelides. With regardful ear
'Tis juſt, O Goddeſs! I thy dictates hear.
Hard as it is, my vengeance I ſuppreſs:
Thoſe who revere the Gods, the Gods will bleſs.
He ſaid; obſervant of the blue-ey'd maid;
Then in the ſheath return'd the ſhining blade.
The Goddeſs ſwift to high Olympus flies,
And joins the ſacred ſenate of the ſkies.
Nor yet the rage his boiling breaſt forſook,
Which thus redoubling on Atrides broke.
O monſter! mix'd of inſolence and fear.
Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer!
When wert thou known in ambuſh'd fights to dare,
Or nobly face the horrid front of war?
'Tis ours, the chance of fighting fields to try,
Thine to look on, and bid the valiant die.
So much 'tis ſafer thro' the camp to go,
And rob a ſubject, than deſpoil a foe.
Scourge of thy people, violent and baſe!
Sent in Jove's anger on a ſlaviſh race,

Ver. 298. *Thou dog in forehead.*] It has been one of the objections againſt the manners of Homer's heroes, that they are abuſive. Monſ. de la Motte affirms in his diſcourſe upon the Iliad, that great men differ from the vulgar in their manner of expreſſing their paſſion; but certainly in violent paſſions (ſuch as thoſe of Achilles and Agamemnon) the great are as ſubject as any others to theſe ſallies; of which we have frequent examples both from hiſtory and experience.

Ver. 299. *In ambuſh'd fights to dare.*] Homer has magnified the ambuſh as the boldeſt manner of fight. They went upon thoſe parties with a few men only, and generally the moſt daring of the army, on occaſions of the greateſt hazard, where they were therefore more expoſed than in a regular battle. Thus Idomeneus, in the thirteenth book, expreſsly tells Meriones, that the greateſt courage appears in this way of ſervice, each man being in a manner ſingled out to the proof of it. Euſtathius.

Who, loſt to ſenſe of gen'rous freedom paſt,
Are tam'd to wrongs, or this had been thy laſt.
Now by this ſacred ſceptre, hear me ſwear,
Which never more ſhall leaves or bloſſoms bear,
Which ſever'd from the trunk (as I from thee)
On the bare mountains left its parent tree;
This ſcepre, form'd by temper'd ſteel to prove
An enſign of the delegates of Jove,
From whom the pow'r of laws and juſtice ſprings:
(Tremendous oath! inviolate to kings)
By this I ſwear, when bleeding Greece again
Shall call Achilles, ſhe ſhall call in vain.
When ſlaughter'd with ſlaughter, Hector comes to ſpread
The purpled ſhore with mountains of the dead,
Then ſhalt thou mourn th' affront thy madneſs gave,
Force'd to deplore, when impotent to ſave:
Then rage in bitterneſs of ſoul, to know
This act has made the braveſt Greek thy foe.

He ſpoke; and furious hurl'd againſt the ground
His ſceptre ſtarr'd with golden ſtuds around,
Then ſternly ſilent ſate. With like diſdain,
The raging king return'd his frowns again.

To calm their paſſion with the words of age,
Slow from his ſeat aroſe the Pylian ſage,

Ver. 309. *Now by this ſacred ſceptre.*] Spondanus in this place blames Euſtathius, for ſaying that Homer makes Achilles in his paſſion ſwear by the firſt thing he meets with: and then aſſigns (as from himſelf) two cauſes, which the other had mentioned ſo plainly before, that it is a wonder they could be overlooked.

Ver. 324. *Thy raſhneſs made the braveſt Greek thy foe.*] If ſelf-praiſe had not been agreeable to the haughty nature of Achilles, yet Plutarch has mentioned a caſe, and with reſpect to him, wherein it is allowable. He ſays that Achilles has at other times aſcribed his ſucceſs to Jupiter, but it is permitted to a man of merit and figure who is injuriouſly dealt with, to ſpeak frankly of himſelf to thoſe who are forgetful and unthankful.

Experience'd

Experience'd Neſtor, in perſuaſion ſkill'd,
Words, ſweet as honey, from his lips diſtill'd:
Two generations now had paſt away,
Wiſe by his rules, and happy by his ſway;
Two ages o'er his native realm he reign'd,
And now th' example of the third remain'd.
All view'd with awe the venerable man;
Who thus, with mild benevolence, began:
What ſhame, what woe is this to Greece! what joy
To Troy's proud monarch, and the friends of Troy!
That adverſe Gods commit to ſtern debate
The beſt, the braveſt of the Grecian ſtate.
Young as ye are, this youthful heat reſtrain,
Nor think your Neſtor's years and wiſdom vain.
A godlike race of heroes once I knew,
Such, as no more theſe aged eyes ſhall view!
Lives there a chief to match Pirithous' fame,
Dryas the bold, or Cenens' deathleſs name;

Ver. 333. *Two generations.*] The commentators make not Neſtor to have lived three hundred years (according to Ovid's opinion;) they take the word γενεὰ not to ſignify a century or age of the world; but a generation, or compaſs of time in which one ſet of men flouriſh, which in the common computation is thirty years; and accordingly is here tranſlated as much the more probable.

Ver. 339. *What ſhame.*] The quarrel having riſen to its higheſt extravagance, Neſtor the wiſeſt and moſt aged Greek is raiſed to quiet the princes, whoſe ſpeech is therefore framed entirely with an oppoſite air to all which has been hitherto ſaid, ſedate and inoffenſive. He begins with a ſoft affectionate complaint which he oppoſes to their threats and haughty language; he reconciles their attention in an awful manner, by putting them in mind that they hear one whom their fathers and the greateſt heroes had heard with deference. He ſides with neither, that he might not anger any one, while he adviſes them to the proper methods of reconciliation; and he appears to ſide with both while he praiſes each, that they may be induced by the recollection of one another's worth to return to that amity, which would bring ſucceſs to the cauſe.

Theſeus, endu'd with more than mortal might,
Or Polyphemus, like the Gods in fight?
With theſe of old to toils of battel bred,
In early youth my hardy days I led;
Fir'd with the thirſt which virtuous envy breeds,
And ſmit with love of honourable deeds.
Strongeſt of men, they pierce'd the mountain boar
Range'd the wild deſarts red with monſter's gore;
And from their hills the ſhaggy Centaurs tore.
Yet theſe with ſoft, perſuaſive arts I ſway'd;
When Neſtor ſpoke, they liſten'd and obey'd.
If in my youth, ev'n theſe eſteem'd me wiſe,
Do you, young warriors, hear my age adviſe.
Atrides, ſeize not on the beauteous ſlave;
That prize the Greeks by common ſuffrage gave:
Nor thou, Achilles, treat our prince with pride;
Let kings be juſt, and ſov'reign pow'r preſide.
Thee, the firſt honours of the war adorn,
Like Gods in ſtrength, and of a Goddeſs born;
Him, awful majeſty exalts above
The pow'rs of earth, and ſcepter'd ſons of Jove.
Let both unite with well-conſenting mind,
So ſhall authority with ſtrength be join'd.
Leave me, O king! to calm Achilles' rage;
Rule thou thyſelf, as more advance'd in age.
Forbid it, Gods! Achilles ſhould be loſt,
The pride of Greece, and bulwark of our hoſt.
This ſaid, he ceas'd: The king of men replies:
Thy years are awful, and thy words are wiſe.
But that imperious, that unconquer'd ſoul,
No laws can limit, no reſpect controul.
Before his pride muſt his ſuperiors fall,
His word the law, and he the lord of all?
Him muſt our hoſts, our chiefs, ourſelf obey?
What king can bear a rival in his ſway?

Grant

Grant that the Gods his matchleſs force have giv'n;
Has foul reproach a privilege from heav'n?
Here on the monarch's ſpeech Achilles broke,
And furious, thus, and interrupting ſpoke.
Tyrant, I well deſerv'd thy galling chain,
To live thy ſlave, and ſtill to ſerve in vain,
Should I ſubmit to each unjuſt decree:
Command thy vaſſals, but command not me.
Seize on Briſeis, whom the Grecians doom'd
My prize of war, yet tamely ſee reſum'd;
And ſeize ſecure; No more Achilles draws
His conqu'ring ſword in any woman's cauſe.
The Gods command me to forgive the paſt;
But let this firſt invaſion be the laſt:
For know, thy blood, when next thou dar'ſt invade,
Shall ſtream in vengeance on my reeking blade.
At this they ceas'd; the ſtern debate expir'd:
The chiefs in ſullen majeſty retir'd.
Achilles with Patroclus took his way,
Where near his tents his hollow veſſels lay.
Mean time Atrides launch'd with num'rous oars
A well-rigg'd ſhip for Chryſa's ſacred ſhores:
High on the deck was fair Chryſeis place'd,
And ſage Ulyſſes with the conduct grace'd:
Safe in her ſides the hecatomb they ſtow'd,
Then ſwiftly ſailing, cut the liquid road.

Ver. 394. —— *No more Achilles draws*
His conqu'ring ſword in any woman's cauſe.]

When Achilles promiſes, not to conteſt for Briſeis, he expreſſes it in a ſharp deſpiſing air, *I will not fight for the ſake of a woman*; by which he glances at Helena, and caſt an oblique reflection upon thoſe commanders whom he is about to leave at the ſiege for her cauſe. One may obſerve how well it is fancied of the poet, to make one woman the ground of a quarrel which breaks an alliance that was only formed upon account of another: and how much the circumſtance thus conſidered, contributes to keep up the anger of Achilles, for carrying on the poem beyond this diſſolution of the council.

The hoſt to expiate, next the king prepares,
With pure luſtrations, and with ſolemn pray'rs.
Waſh'd by the briny wave, the pious train
Are cleans'd; and caſt th' ablutions in the main.
Along the ſhore whole hecatombs were laid,
And bulls and goats to Phœbus' altars paid.
The ſable fumes in curling ſpires ariſe,
And waft their grateful odours to the ſkies.
The army thus in ſacred rites engage'd,
Atrides ſtill with deep reſentment rage'd.
To wait his will two ſacred heralds ſtood,
Talthybius and Eurybates the good.
Haſte to the fierce Achilles' tent (he cries)
Thence bear Briſeis as our royal prize.
Submit he muſt; or if they will not part,
Ourſelf in arms ſhall tear her from his heart.
Th' unwilling heralds act their lord's commands;
Penſive they walk along the barren ſands:
Arriv'd, the hero in his tent they find,
With gloomy aſpect, on his arm reclin'd.
At awful diſtance long they ſilent ſtand,
Loth to advance, or ſpeak their hard command;
Decent confuſion! This the godlike man.
Perceiv'd, and thus with accent mild began.

Ver. 430. *At awful diſtance ſilent.*] There was required a very remarkable management to preſerve all the characters which are concerned in this nice conjuncture, wherein the heralds were to obey at their peril; Agamemnon was to be gratified by an inſult on Achilles; and Achilles was to ſuffer ſo as might become his pride, and not have his violent temper provoked. From all this the poet has found the ſecret to extricate himſelf, by only taking care to make his heralds ſtand in ſight, and ſilent. Thus they neither make Agamemnon's majeſty ſuffer by uttering their meſſage ſubmiſſively, nor occaſion a rough treatment from Achilles by demanding Briſeis in the peremptory air he ordered; and at the ſame time Achilles is gratified with the opportunity of giving her up, as if he rather ſent her, than was forced to relinquiſh her. The art of this has been taken notice of by Euſtathius.

With

With leave and honour enter our abodes,
Ye ſacred miniſters of men and Gods!
I know your meſſage; by conſtraint you came;
Not you, but your imperious lord I blame.
Patroclus haſte, the fair Briſeis bring;
Conduct my captive to the haughty king.
But witneſs, heralds, and proclaim my vow,
Witneſs to Gods above, and men below!
But firſt, and loudeſt, to your prince declare,
That lawleſs tyrant whoſe commands you bear;
Unmov'd as death Achilles ſhall remain,
Tho' proſtrate Greece ſhould bleed at ev'ry vein:
The raging chief in frantic paſſion loſt,
Blind to himſelf, and uſeleſs to his hoſt,
Unſkill'd to judge the future by the paſt,
In blood and ſlaughter ſhall repent at laſt.
Patroclus now th' unwilling beauty brought;
She, in ſoft ſorrows, and in penſive thought,
Paſt ſilent, as the heralds held her hand,
And oft look'd back, ſlow-moving o'er the ſtrand.
Not ſo his loſs the fierce Achilles bore;
But ſad retiring to the ſounding ſhore,
O'er the wild margin of the deep he hung,
That kindred deep from whence his mother ſprung:

Ver 451. *She, in ſoft ſorrows.*] The behaviour of Briſeis in her departure is no leſs beautifully imagined than the former. A French or Italian poet had laviſhed all his wit and paſſion in two long ſpeeches on this occaſion, which the heralds muſt have wept to hear: inſtead of which, Homer gives us a fine picture of nature. We ſee Briſeis paſſing unwillingly along, with a dejected air, melted in tenderneſs, and not able to utter a word: and in the lines immediately following, we have a contraſt to this in the gloomy reſentment of Achilles, who ſuddenly retires to the ſhore, and vents his rage aloud to the ſeas. The variation of the numbers juſt in this place adds a great beauty to it, which has been endeavoured at in the tranſlation.

There,

There, bath'd in tears of anger and diſdain,
Thus loud lamented to the ſtormy main.
O parent Goddeſs: ſince in early bloom,
Thy ſon muſt fall, by too ſevere a doom;
Sure, to ſo ſhort a race of glory born,
Great Jove in juſtice ſhould this ſpan adorn:
Honour and fame at leaſt the thund'rer ow'd,
And ill he pays the promiſe of a God;
If yon' proud monarch thus thy ſon defies,
Obſcures my glories, and reſumes my prize.
Far from the deep receſſes of the main,
Where aged Ocean holds his wat'ry reign,
The Goddeſs-mother heard. The waves divide;
And like a miſt ſhe roſe above the tide;
Beheld him mourning on the naked ſhores,
And thus the ſorrows of his ſoul explores.
Why grieves my ſon? Thy anguiſh let me ſhare,
Reveal the cauſe, and truſt a parent's care.

Ver. 458. *There, bath'd in tears.*] Euſtathius obſerves on this place, that it is no weakneſs in heroes to weep, but the very effect of humanity, and proof of a generous temper; for which he offers ſeveral inſtances, and takes notice, that if Sophocles would not let Ajax weep, it is becauſe he is drawn rather as a madman than a hero. But this general obſervation is not all we can offer in excuſe for the tears of Achilles: his are tears of anger and diſdain (as I have ventured to call them in the tranſlation) of which a great and fiery temper is more ſuſceptible than any other; and even in this caſe Homer has taken care to preſerve the high character, by making him to retire to vent his tears out of ſight.

Ver. 464. *The thund'rer ow'd.*] This alluges to a ſtory which Achilles tells the ambaſſadors of Agamemnon, Il. 9. That he had the choice of two fates: one leſs glorious at home, but bleſſed with a very long life; the other full of glory at Troy, but then he was never to return. The alternative being thus propoſed to him (not from Jupiter, but Thetis, who revealed the decree,) he choſe the latter, which he looks upon as his due, ſince he gives away length of life for it: and accordingly, when he complains to his mother of the diſgrace he lies under, it is in this manner he makes a demand of honour.

He

He deeply ſighing ſaid: To tell my woe,
Is but to mention what too well you know.
From Thebe ſacred to Apollo's name,
(Aëtion's realms) our conqu'ring army came,
With treaſure loaded and triumphant ſpoils,
Whoſe juſt diviſion crown'd the ſoldier's toils;
But bright Chryſeis, heav'nly prize! was led
By vote ſelected, to the gen'ral's bed.
The prieſt of Phœbus ſought by gifts to gain
His beauteous daughter from the victor's chain;
The fleet he reach'd, and lowly bending down,
Held forth the ſceptre and the laurel crown,
Entreating all: but chief implor'd for grace
The brother kings of Atreus's royal race:
The gen'rous Greeks their joint conſent declare,
The prieſt to rev'rence, and releaſe the fair;
Not ſo Atrides: He, with wonted pride,
The ſire inſulted, and his gifts deny'd:
Th' inſulted ſire (his God's peculiar care)
To Phœbus pray'd, and Phœbus heard the pray'r:
A dreadful plague enſues: Th' avenging darts
Inceſſant fly, and pierce the Grecian hearts.
A prophet then, inſpir'd by heav'n, aroſe,
And points the crime, and thence derives the woes:
Myſelf the firſt the aſſembled chiefs incline
T' avert the vengeance of the pow'r divine;

Ver. 478. *From Thebe.*] Homer, who opened his poem with the action which immediately brought on Achilles's anger, being now to give an account of the ſame thing again, takes his riſe more backward in the ſtory. Thus the reader is informed in what he ſhould know, without having been delayed from entering upon the promiſed ſubject. This is the firſt attempt which we ſee made towards the poetical method of narration, which differs from the hiſtorical, in that it does not proceed always directly in the line of time, but ſometimes relates things which have gone before, when a more proper opportunity demands it, to make the narration more informing or beautiful.

Then

Then riſing in his wrath, the monarch ſtorm'd:
Incens'd he threaten'd, and his theats perform'd:
The fair Chryſeis to her ſire was ſent,
With offer'd gifts to make the God relent:
But now he ſeiz'd Briſeis' heav'nly charms,
And of my valour's prize defrauds my arms,
Defrauds the votes of all the Grecian train;
And ſervice, faith, and juſtice plead in vain.
But Goddeſs! thou, thy ſuppliant ſon attend,
To high Olympus' ſhining court aſcend,
Urge all thy ties to former ſervice ow'd,
And ſue for vengeance to the thund'ring God,
Oft haſt thou triumph'd in the glorious boaſt,
That thou ſtood'ſt forth, of all th' æthereal hoſt,
When bold rebellion ſhook the realms above,
Th' undaunted guard of cloud-compelling Jove.
When the bright partner of his awful reign,
The warlike maid, and monarch of the main,
The traitor-gods, by mad abition driven,
Durſt threat with chains th' omnipotence of heav'n.
Then call'd by thee, the monſter Titan came,
(Whom Gods Briareus, men Ægeon name)
Thro' wond'ring ſkies enormous ſtalk along:
Not * he that ſhakes the ſolid earth ſo ſtrong:
With giant-pride at Jove's high throne he ſtands,
And brandiſh'd round him all his hundred hands;
Th' affrighted Gods confeſs'd their awful lord,
They dropt the fetters, trembled and ador'd.
This, Goddeſs, this to his remembrance call,
Embrace his knees, at his tribunal fall;
Conjure him far to drive the Grecian train,
To hurl them headlong to their fleet and main,
To heap the ſhores with copious death, and bring
The Greeks to know the curſe of ſuch a king;

* Neptune.

Let

Let Agamemnon lift his haughty head
O'er all his wide dominion of the dead,
And mourn in blood, that e'er he durſt diſgrace
The boldeſt warrior of the Grecian race.
Unhappy ſon! (fair Thetis thus replies,
While tears celeſtial trickle from her eyes)
Why have I born thee with a mother's throes,
To fates averſe, and nurs'd for future woes?
So ſhort a ſpace the light of heav'n to view!
So ſhort a ſpace! and fill'd with ſorrow too!
O might a parent's careful wiſh prevail,
Far, far from Ilion ſhould thy veſſels ſail,
And thou, from camps remote, the danger ſhun,
Which now, alas! too nearly threats my ſon.
Yet (what I can) to move thy ſuit I'll go,
To great Olympus crown'd with fleecy ſnow.
Mean time, ſecure within thy ſhips from far
Behold the field, nor mingle in the war.
The ſire of Gods, and all th' æthereal train,
On the warm limits of the fartheſt main,
Now mix with mortals, nor diſdain to grace
The feaſt of Æthiopia's blameleſs race;
Twelve days the pow'rs indulge the genial rite,
Returning with the twelfth revolving light.
Then will I mount the brazen dome, and move
The high tribunal of immortal Jove.

Ver. 557. *The feaſts of Æthiopia's blameleſs race.*] The Æthiopians, ſays Diodorus. l. 3. are ſaid to be the inventors of pomps, ſacrifices, ſolemn meetings, and other honours paid to the Gods. From hence aroſe their character of piety, which is here celebrated by Homer. Among theſe there was an annual feaſt at Dioſpolis, which Euſtathius mentions, wherein they carried about the ſtatues of Jupiter and the other Gods, for twelve days, according to their number: to which if we add the ancient cuſtom of ſetting meat before ſtatues, it will appear a rite from which this fable might eaſily ariſe.

The Goddeſs ſpoke: The rolling waves uncloſe;
Then down the deep ſhe plunge'd from whence ſhe roſe.
And left him ſorrowing on the lonely coaſt,
In wild reſentment for the fair he loſt.
In Chryſa's port now ſage Ulyſſes rode;
Beneath the deck the deſtin'd victims ſtow'd:
The ſails they furl'd, they laſh'd the maſt aſide,
And dropt their anchors, and the pinnace ty'd.
Next on the ſhore their hecatomb they land,
Chryſeis laſt deſcending on the ſtrand.
Her, thus returning from the furrow'd main,
Ulyſſes led to Phœbus' ſacred fane;
Where at his ſolemn altar, as the maid
He gave to Chryſes, thus the hero ſaid.
Hail rev'rend prieſt! to Phœbus' awful dome
A ſuppliant I from great Atrides come:
Unranſom'd here receive the ſpotleſs fair;
Accept the hecatomb the Greeks prepare;
And may thy God who ſcatters darts around,
Aton'd by ſacrifice, deſiſt to wound.
At this, the ſire embrace'd the maid again,
So ſadly loſt, ſo lately ſought in vain,
Then near the altar of the darting king,
Diſpos'd in rank their hecatomb they bring:
With water purify their hands, and take
The ſacred off'ring of the ſalted cake;
While thus with arms devoutly rais'd in air,
And ſolemn voice, the prieſt directs his pray'r.
God of the ſilver bow, thy ear incline,
Whoſe pow'r encircles Cilla the divine;
Whoſe ſacred eye thy Tenedos ſurveys,
And gilds fair Chryſa with diſtinguiſh'd rays!
If, fir'd to vengeance at thy prieſt's requeſt,
Thy direful darts inflict the raging peſt;
Once more attend! avert the waſteful woe,
And ſmile propitious, and unbend thy bow.

So

So Chryſes pray'd, Apollo heard his pray'r:
And now the Greeks their hecatomb prepare;
Between their horns the ſalted barley threw,
And with their heads to heav'n the victims ſlew:
The limbs they ſever from th' incloſing hide;
The thighs, ſelected to the Gods, divide:
On theſe, in double cawls involv'd with art,
The choiceſt morſels lay from every part.
The prieſt himſelf before his altar ſtands,
And burns the off'ring with his holy hands,
Pours the black wine, and ſees the flames aſpire;
The youth with inſtruments ſurround the fire:
The thighs thus ſacrifice'd, and entrails dreſt,
Th' aſſiſtants part, transfix, and roaſt the reſt:
Then ſpread the tables, the repaſt prepare,
Each takes his ſeat, and each receives his ſhare.

Ver. 600. *The ſacrifice.*] If we conſider this paſſage, it is not made to ſhine in poetry: all that can be done is to give it numbers, and endeavour to ſet the particulars in a diſtinct view. But if we take it in another light, and as a piece of learning, it is valuable for being the moſt exact account of the ancient ſacrifices any where left us. There is, firſt, the purification, by waſhing of hands: Secondly, the offering up of prayers: Thirdly, the *mola*, or barley-cake thrown upon the victim: Fourthly, the manner of killing it with the head turned upwards to the celeſtial Gods (as they turned it downwards when they offered to the infernals:) Fifthly, their ſelecting the thighs and fat for their Gods as the beſt of the ſacrifice, and the diſpoſing about them pieces cut from every part for a repreſentation of the whole; (hence the thighs, or μηρία, are frequently uſed in Homer and the Greek poets for the whole victim:) Sixthly, the libation of wine: Seventhly, conſuming the thighs in the fire of the altar: Eighthly, the ſacrificers dreſſing and feaſting on the reſt, with joy and hymns to the Gods. Thus punctually have the ancient poets, and in particular Homer, written with a care and reſpect to religion. One may queſtion whether any country, as much a ſtranger to Chriſtianity as we are to heathenism, might be ſo well informed by our poets in the worſhip belonging to any profeſſion of religion at preſent.

When now the rage of hunger was repreſt,
With pure libations they conclude the feaſt;
The youths with wine the copious goblets crown'd,
And pleas'd diſpenſe the flowing bowls around.
With hymns divine the joyous banquet ends,
The Pæans lengthen'd 'till the ſun deſcends:
The Greeks reſtor'd, the grateful notes prolong;
Apollo liſtens, and approves the ſong.
'Twas night; the chiefs beſide their veſſel lie,
'Till roſy morn had purpled o'er the ſky:
Then launch, and hoiſe the maſt; indulgent gales,
Supply'd by Phœbus, fill the ſwelling ſails;
The milk-white canvas bellying as they blow,
The parted ocean foams and roars below:
Above the bounding billows ſwift they flew,
'Till now the Grecian camp appear'd in view.
Far on the beach they haul their bark to land,
(The crooked keel divides the yellow ſand)
Then part, where ſtretch'd along the winding bay,
The ſhips and tents in mingled proſpect lay.
But raging ſtill amidſt his navy ſate
The ſtern Achilles, ſtedfaſt in his hate;
Nor mix'd in combat, nor in council join'd;
But waſting cares lay heavy on his mind:
In his black thoughts revenge and ſlaughter roll,
And ſcenes of blood riſe dreadful in his ſoul.
Twelve days were paſt, and now the dawning light
The Gods had ſummon'd to the Olympian height:
Jove firſt aſcending from the wat'ry bow'rs,
Leads the long order of æthereal pow'rs.
When like the morning miſt in early day,
Roſe from the flood the daughter of the ſea;
And to the ſeats divine her flight addreſt.
There, far apart, and high above the reſt,
The thund'rer ſate; where old Olympus ſhrouds
His hundred heads in heav'n, and props the clouds.

Suppliant

Suppliant the Goddeſs ſtood: One hand ſhe place'd
Beneath his beard, and one his knee embrace'd.
If e'er, O father of the Gods, ſhe ſaid,
My words could pleaſe thee, or my actions aid;
Some marks of honour on my ſon beſtow,
And pay in glory what in life you owe.
Fame is at leaſt by heav'nly promiſe due
To life ſo ſhort, and now diſhonour'd too.
Avenge this wrong, oh ever juſt and wiſe!
Let Greece be humbled, and the Trojans riſe
'Till the proud king, and all the Achaian race
Shall heap with honours him they now diſgrace.
Thus Thetis ſpoke, but Jove in ſilence held
The ſacred councils of his breaſt conceal'd.
Not ſo repuls'd, the Goddeſs cloſer preſt,
Still graſp'd his knees, and urge'd the dear requeſt.
O ſire of Gods and men! thy ſuppliant hear,
Refuſe, or grant; for what has Jove to fear;
Or oh, declare, of all the pow'rs above
Is wretched Thetis leaſt the care of Jove?
She ſaid, and ſighing thus the God replies,
Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted ſkies.
What haſt thou aſk'd? Ah why ſhould Jove engage
In foreign conteſts, and domeſtic rage,
The God's complaints, and Juno's fierce alarms,
While I, too partial, aid the Trojan arms?
Go, leſt the haughty partner of my ſway
With jealous eyes thy cloſe acceſs ſurvey;
But part in peace, ſecure thy pray'r is ſped:
Witneſs the ſacred honours of our head,
The nod that ratifies the will divine,
The faithful, fix'd, irrevocable ſign;

This

Ver. 681. *The faithful, fix'd, irrevocable ſign.*] There are among men three things by which the efficacy of a promiſe may be made void; the deſign not to perform it, the want of power to bring it

This ſeals thy ſuit, and this fulfils thy vows——
He ſpoke, and awful bends his ſable brows;
Shakes his ambroſial curls, and gives the nod;
The ſtamp of fate, and ſanction of the God:
High heav'n with trembling the dread ſignal took,
And all Olympus to the centre ſhook.
Swift to the ſeas profound the Goddeſs flies,
Jove to his ſtarry manſion in the ſkies.
The ſhining ſynod of th' immortals wait
The coming God, and from their thrones of ſtate
Ariſing ſilent, wrapt in holy fear,
Before the majeſty of heav'n appear.
Trembling they ſtand, while Jove aſſumes the throne,
All, but the God's imperious queen alone:
Late had ſhe view'd the ſilver-footed dame,
And all her paſſions kindled into ſhame.

to paſs, and the inſtability of our tempers; from all which Homer ſaw that the Divinity muſt be exempted, and therefore he deſcribes the nod, or ratification of Jupiter's word, as faithful, in oppoſition to fraud; ſure of being performed, in oppoſition to weakneſs; and irrevocable, in oppoſition to our repenting of a promiſe. Euſtath.

Ver. 683. *He ſpoke, and awful bends.*] This deſcription of the majeſty of Jupiter has ſomething exceedingly grand and venerable. Macrobius reports, that Phidias having made his Olympian Jupiter, which paſt for one of the greateſt miracles of art, was aſked from what pattern he framed ſo divine a figure, and anſwered, it was from that archetype which he found in theſe lines of Homer.

Ver. 694. *Jove aſſumes the throne.*] As Homer makes the firſt council of his men to be one continued ſcene of anger, whereby the Grecian chiefs became divided, ſo he makes the firſt meeting of the Gods to be ſpent in the ſame paſſion; whereby Jupiter is more fixed to aſſiſt the Trojans, and Juno more incenſed againſt them. Thus the deſign of the poem goes on: The anger which began the book overſpreads all exiſtent beings by the latter end of it: Heaven and earth become engaged in the ſubject, by which it riſes to a great importance in the reader's eyes, and is haſtened forward into the briſkeſt ſcenes of action that can be framed upon that violent paſſion.

Say,

Say, artful manager of heav'n, (ſhe cries,)
Who now partakes the ſecrets of the ſkies?
Thy Juno knows not the decrees of fate,
In vain the partner of imperial ſtate.
What fav'rite Goddeſs then thoſe cares divides,
Which Jove in prudence from his conſort hides?
To this the Thund'rer: Seek not thou to find
The ſacred counſels of almighty mind:
Involv'd in darkneſs lies the great decree,
Nor can the depths of fate be pierce'd by thee.
What fits thy knowledge, thou the firſt ſhalt know:
The firſt of Gods above, and men below;
But thou, nor they, ſhall ſearch the thoughts that roll
Deep in the cloſe receſſes of my ſoul.
Full on the fire the Goddeſs of the ſkies
Roll'd the large orbs of her majeſtic eyes,
And thus return'd. Auſtere Saturnius, ſay,
From whence this wrath, or who controuls thy ſway?
Thy boundleſs will, for me, remains in force,
And all thy counſels take the deſtin'd courſe.
But 'tis for Greece I fear: for late was ſeen,
In cloſe conſult, the ſilver-footed queen.
Jove to his Thetis nothing could deny,
Nor was the ſignal vain that ſhook the ſky.
What fatal favour has the Goddeſs won,
To grace her fierce, inexorable ſon?
Perhaps in Grecian blood to drench the plain,
And glut his vengeance with my people ſlain.
Then thus the God: Oh reſtleſs fate of pride,
That ſtrives to learn what Heav'n reſolves to hide;
Vain is the ſearch, preſumptuous and abhorr'd,
Anxious to thee, and odious to thy lord.
Let this ſuffice; th' immutable decree
No force can ſhake: What is, that ought to be.
Goddeſs, ſubmit, nor dare our will withſtand,
But dread the pow'r of this avenging hand;

Th' unit-

Th' united ſtrength of all the Gods above
In vain reſiſts th' omnipotence of Jove.
The Thund'rer ſpoke, nor durſt the queen reply;
A rev'rend horror ſilence'd all the ſky.
The feaſt diſturb'd, with ſorrow Vulcan ſaw,
His mother menace'd, and the Gods in awe;
Peace at his heart, and pleaſure his deſign,
Thus interpos'd the architect divine.
The wretched quarrels of the mortal ſtate
Are far unworthy, Gods! of your debate:
Let men their days in ſenſeleſs ſtrife employ,
We, in eternal peace, and conſtant joy.
Thou, Goddeſs-mother, with our ſire comply,
Nor break the ſacred union of the ſky:
Leſt, rouz'd to rage, he ſhake the bleſt abodes,
Launch the red lightning, and dethrone the Gods.
If you ſubmit, the Thund'rer ſtands appeas'd;
The gracious pow'r is willing to be pleas'd.
Thus Vulcan ſpoke; and riſing with a bound,
The double bowl with ſparkling Nectar crown'd,
Which held to Juno in a chearful way,
Goddeſs, (he cry'd,) be patient and obey.

Ver. 741. *Thus interpos'd the architect divine.*] This quarrel of the Gods being come to its height, the poet makes Vulcan interpoſe, who freely puts them in mind of pleaſure, inoffenſively adviſes Juno, illuſtrates his advice by an example of his own misfortune, turning the jeſt on himſelf to enliven the banquet; and concludes the part he is to ſupport with ſerving Nectar about. Homer had here his Minerva or Wiſdom to interpoſe again, and every other quality of the mind reſided in heaven under the appearance of ſome deity: So that his introducing Vulcan, proceeded not from a want of choice, but an inſight into nature. He knew that a friend to mirth often diverts or ſtops quarrels, eſpecially when he contrives to ſubmit himſelf to the laugh, and prevails on the angry to part in good humour, or in a diſpoſition to friendſhip; when grave repreſentations are ſometimes reproaches, ſometimes lengthen the debate by occaſioning defences, and ſometimes introduce new parties into the conſequences of it.

Dear

Dear as you are, if Jove his arm extend,
I can but grieve unable to defend.
What God ſo daring in your aid to move,
Or lift his hand againſt the force of Jove?
Once in your cauſe I felt his matchleſs might,
Hurl'd headlong downward from th' etherial height;
Toſt all the day in rapid circles round;
Nor till the ſun deſcended, touch'd the ground:
Breathleſs I fell, in giddy motion loſt;
The Sinthians rais'd me on the Lemnian coaſt.
He ſaid, and to her hands the goblet heav'd,
Which, with a ſmile, the white-arm'd queen receiv'd.
Then to the reſt he fill'd; and, in his turn,
Each to his lips apply'd the nectar'd urn.
Vulcan with aukward grace his office plies,
And unextinguiſh'd laughter ſhakes the ſkies.

Ver. 760. *Once in your cauſe I felt his matchleſs might.*] They who ſearch another vein of allegory for hidden knowledge in natural philoſophy, have conſidered Jupiter and Juno as heaven and the air, whoſe alliance is interrupted when the air is troubled above, but reſtored again when it is cleared by heat, or Vulcan the God of heat. Him they call a divine artificer, from the activity or general uſe of fire in working. They ſuppoſe him to be born in heaven, where philoſophers ſay that element has its proper place; and is thence derived to the earth, which is ſignified by the fall of Vulcan; that he fell in Lemnos, becauſe that iſland abounds with ſubterranean fires; and that he contracted a lameneſs or imperfection by the fall; the fire not being ſo pure and active below, but mixed and terreſtrial. Euſtathius.

Ver. 771. *Laughter ſhakes the ſkies.*] Vulcan deſigned to move laughter by taking upon him the office of Hebe and Ganymede, with his aukward limping carriage. But though he prevailed, and Homer tells you the Gods did laugh, yet he takes care not to mention a word of his lameneſs, It would have been cruel in him, and wit out of ſeaſon, to have enlarged with deriſion upon an imperfection which is out of one's power to remedy. According to this good-natured opinion of Euſtathius, Mr. Dryden has treated Vulcan a little barbarouſly. He makes his character perfectly comical, he is the jeſt of the board, and the Gods are very merry upon the imperfections of his figure.

Thus

Thus the bleſt Gods the genial day prolong,
In feaſts ambroſial, and celeſtial ſong.
Apollo tun'd the lyre; the muſes round
With voice alternate aid the ſilver ſound,
Meantime the radiant ſon, to mortal ſight
Deſcending ſwift, roll'd down the rapid light.
Then to their ſtarry domes the Gods depart,
The ſhining monuments of Vulcan's art:
Jove on his couch reclin'd his awful head,
And Juno ſlumber'd on the golden bed.

Ver. 778. *Then to their ſtarry domes.*] The aſtrologers aſſign twelve houſes to the planets, wherein they are ſaid to have dominion. Now becauſe Homer tells us Vulcan built a manſion for every God, the ancients write that he firſt gave occaſion for this doctrine.

THE

THE ILIAD.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The trial of the army, and catalogue of the forces.

JUPITER, in purſuance of the requeſt of Thetis, ſends a deceitful viſion to Agamemnon, perſuading him to lead the army to battle; in order to make the Greeks ſenſible of their want of Achilles. The general, who is deluded with the hopes of taking Troy without his aſſiſtance, but fears the army was diſcouraged by his abſence and the late plague, as well as by length of time, contrives to make trial of their diſpoſition by a ſtratagem. He firſt communicates his deſign to the princes in council, that he would propoſe a return to the ſoldiers, and that they ſhould put a ſtop to them if the propoſal was embraced. Then he aſſembles the whole hoſt, and, upon moving for a return to Greece, they unanimouſly agree to it, and run to prepare the ſhips. They are detained by the management of Ulyſſes, who chaſtiſes the inſolence of Therſites. The aſſembly is recalled, ſeveral ſpeeches made on the occaſion, and at length the advice of Neſtor followed, which was to make a general muſter of the troops, and to divide them into their ſeveral nations, before they proceeded to battle. This gives occaſion to the poet to enumerate all the forces of the Greeks and Trojans, in a large catalogue.

The time employed in this book conſiſts not entirely of one day. The ſcene lies in the Grecian camp and upon the ſea-ſhore; toward the end it removes to Troy.

NOW pleaſing ſleep had ſeal'd each mortal eye,
Stretch'd in the tents the Grecian leaders lie,
Th' immortals ſlumber'd on their thrones above;
All, but the ever-wakeful eyes of Jove.
To honour Thetis' ſon he bends his care
And plunge the Greeks in all the woes of war:
Then bids an empty phantom riſe to fight,
And thus commands the viſion of the night.
Fly hence, deluding dream! and light as air,
To Agamemnon's ample tent repair.
Bid him in arms draw forth th' embattel'd train,
Lead all his Grecians to the duſty plain.
Declare, ev'n now 'tis giv'n him to deſtroy
The lofty tow'rs of wide-extended Troy.
For now no more the Gods with fate contend,
At Juno's ſuit the heavenly factions end.
Deſtruction hangs o'er yon' devoted wall,
And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.
Swift as the word the vain illuſion fled,
Deſcends, and hovers o'er Atrides' head;
Cloth'd

Ver. 1. *Now pleaſing ſleep*, etc.] Ariſtotle tells us in the twenty-ſixth chapter of his art of poetry, that this place had been objected to by ſome critics in thoſe times. They thought it gave a very ill idea of the military diſcipline of the Greeks, to repreſent a whole army unguarded, and all the leaders aſleep: They alſo pretended it was ridiculous to deſcribe all the Gods ſleeping beſides Jupiter. To both theſe Ariſtotle anſwers, that nothing is more uſual or allowable than that figure which puts all for the greater part.

Ver. 20. *Deſcends, and hovers o'er Atrides' head.*] The whole action of the dream is beautifully natural, and agreeable to philoſophy. It perches on his head, to intimate that part to be the ſeat of the ſoul: It is circumfuſed about him, to expreſs that total poſſeſſion of the ſenſes which fancy has during our ſleep. It takes the figure of the perſon who was deareſt to Agamemnon; as whatever we think of moſt, when awake, is the common object of our dreams.

Cloth'd in the figure of the Pylian ſage,
Renown'd for wiſdom, and rever'd for age;
Around his temples ſpreads his golden wing,
And thus the flattering dream deceives the king.
Can'ſt thou, with all a monarch's cares oppreſt,
Oh Atreus' ſon! canſt thou indulge thy reſt?
Ill fits a chief who mighty nations guides,
Directs in council, and in war preſides,
To whom its ſafety a whole people owes,
To waſte long nights in indolent repoſe.
Monarch, awake! 'tis Jove's command I bear,
Thou, and thy glory, claim his heav'nly care.
In juſt array draw forth th' embattel'd train,
Lead all thy Grecians to the duſty plain;
Ev'n now, O king! 'tis given thee to deſtroy
The lofty tow'rs of wide-extended Troy.
For now no more the Gods with fate contend,
At Juno's ſuit the heav'nly factions end.
Deſtruction hangs o'er you' devoted wall,
And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.
Awake, but waking this advice approve,
And truſt the viſion that deſcends from Jove.
The phantom ſaid; then vaniſh'd from his ſight,
Reſolves to air, and mixes with the night.
A thouſands ſchemes the monarch's mind employ;
Elate in thought, he ſacks untaken Troy:

dreams. And juſt at the inſtant of its vaniſhing, it leaves ſuch an impreſſion that the voice ſeems ſtill to ſound in his ear. No deſcription can be more exact or lively. Euſtathius, Dacier.

Ver. 33. *Draw forth th' embattel'd train*, &c.] The dream here repeats the meſſage of Jupiter in the ſame terms that he received it. It is no leſs than the father of Gods and men who gives the order, and to alter a word were preſumption. Homer conſtantly makes his envoys obſerve this practice as a mark of decency and reſpect.

Vain as he was, and to the future blind;
Nor ſaw what Jove and ſecret fate deſign'd,
What mighty toils to either hoſt remain,
What ſcenes of grief, and numbers of the ſlain!
Eager he riſes, and in fancy hears
The voice celeſtial murm'ring in his ears.
Firſt on his limbs a ſlender veſt he drew,
Around him next the regal mantle threw,
Th' embroider'd ſandals on his feet were ty'd;
The ſtarry faulchion glitter'd at his ſide;
And laſt his arm the maſſy ſceptre loads,
Unſtain'd, immortal, and the gift of Gods.
Now roſy morn aſcends the court of Jove,
Lifts up her light, and opens day above.
The king diſpatch'd his heralds with commands
To range the camp, and ſummon all the bands:
The gath'ring hoſts the monarch's word obey;
While to the fleet Atrides bends his way.
In his black ſhip the Pylian prince he found;
There calls a ſenate of the peers around:
Th' aſſembly place'd, the king of men expreſt
The counſels lab'ring in his artful breaſt.
Friends and confed'rates! with attentive ear
Receive my words, and credit what you hear.
Late as I ſlumber'd in the ſhades of night,
A dream divine appear'd before my ſight;
Whoſe viſionary form like Neſtor came,
The ſame in habit, and in mein the ſame.
The heav'nly phantom hover'd o'er my head,
And, doſt thou ſleep, oh Atreus' ſon? (he ſaid)
Ill fits a chief, who mighty nations guides,
Directs in council, and in war preſides,
To whom its ſafety a whole people owes,
To waſte long nights in indolent repoſe.
Monarch, awake! 'tis Jove's command I bear;
Thou and thy glory claim his heav'nly care.

In

In juſt array draw forth th' embattel'd train,
And lead the Grecians to the duſty plain;
Ev'n now, O king! 'tis given thee to deſtroy
The lofty tow'rs of wide extended Troy.
For now no more the Gods with fate contend,
At Juno's ſuit the heav'nly factions end.
Deſtruction hangs o'er yon devoted wall,
And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.
This hear obſervant, and the Gods obey!
The viſion ſpoke, and paſt in air away.
Now, valiant chiefs! ſince Heav'n itſelf alarms,
Unite, and rouze the ſons of Greece to arms.

Ver. 93. *Now, valiant chiefs*, &c.] The beſt commentary extant upon the firſt part of this book is in Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, who has given us an admirable explication of this whole conduct of Agamemnon in his ſecond treatiſe Περὶ ἰσχνματισμένων. He ſays, "This prince had nothing ſo much at heart as to draw "the Greeks to a battle, yet knew not how to proceed without "Achilles, who had juſt retired from the army; and was appreenſive that the Greeks who were diſpleaſed at the departure "of Achilles, might refuſe obedience to his orders, ſhould he abſolutely command it. In this circumſtance he propoſes to the "princes in council to make a trial of arming the Grecians, and "offers an expedient himſelf; which was, that he ſhould ſound "their diſpoſitions by exhorting them to ſet ſail for Greece, but "that then the other princes ſhould be ready to diſſuade and detain them. If any object to this ſtratagem, that Agamemnon's whole ſcheme would be ruined if the army ſhould take "him at his word (which was very probable) it is to be anſwered, that his deſign lay deeper than they imagine, nor did he depend upon his ſpeech only for detaining them. He had ſome "cauſe to fear the Greeks had a pique againſt him which they had "concealed, and whatever it was, he judged it abſolutely neceſſary to know it before he proceeded to a battle. He therefore furniſhes them with an occaſion to manifeſt it, and at the ſame time "provides againſt any ill effects it might have, by his ſecret orders to the princes. It ſucceeds accordingly, and when the "troops are running to embark, they are ſtopp'd by Ulyſſes and "Neſtor."

But firſt, with caution, try what yet they dare,
Worn with nine years of unſucceſsful war?
To move the troops to meaſure back the main,
Be mine; and yours the province to detain.
He ſpoke, and ſat; when Neſtor riſing ſaid,
(Neſtor, whom Pylos' ſandy realms obey'd)
Princes of Greece, your faithful ears incline,
Nor doubt the viſion of the pow'rs divine;
Sent by great Jove to him who rules the hoſt,
Forbid it, Heav'n! this warning ſhould be loſt!
Then let us haſte, obey the God's alarms,
And join to rouze the ſons of Greece to arms.
Thus ſpoke the ſage: The kings without delay
Diſſolve the council, and their chief obey:
The ſceptred rulers lead; the following hoſt
Pour'd forth by thouſands, darkens all the coaſt.
As from ſome rocky-cleft the ſhepherd ſees
Cluſt'ring in heaps on heaps the driving bees,
Rolling, and black'ning, ſwarms ſucceeding ſwarms,
With deeper murmurs and more hoarſe alarms;
Duſky they ſpread, a cloſe embody'd croud,
And o'er the vale deſcends the living cloud.
So, from the tents and ſhips, a length'ning train
Spreads all the beach, and wide o'erſhades the plain:
Along the region runs a deaf'ning ſound;
Beneath their footſteps groans the trembling ground,
Fame flies before, the meſſenger of Jove,
And ſhining ſoars, and claps her wings above.

Nine-

Ver. 121. *As from ſome rocky cleft*, &c.] This is the firſt ſimile in Homer, and we may obſerve in general, that he excels all mankind in the number, variety, and beauty of his compariſons. There are ſcarce any in Virgil which are not tranſlated from him, and therefore when he ſucceeds beſt in them, he is to be commended but as an improver.

Ver. 121. *Fame flies before*, &c.] This aſſembling of the army is

Nine ſacred heralds now proclaiming loud
The monarch's will, ſuſpend the liſt'ning croud.
Soon as the throngs in order range'd appear,
And fainter murmurs dy'd upon the ear,
The king of kings his awful figure rais'd;
High in his hand the golden ſceptre blaz'd:
The golden ſceptre, of celeſtial frame,
By Vulcan form'd, from Jove to Hermes came:
To Pelops he th' immortal gift reſign'd;
Th' immoral gift great Pelops left behind,
In Atreus' hand, which not with Atreus ends,
To rich Thyeſtes next the prize deſcends;
And now the mark of Agamemnon's reign,
Subjects all Argos, and controuls the main.
On this bright ſceptre now the king reclin'd,
And artful thus pronounce'd the ſpeech deſign'd,
Ye ſons of Mars! partake your leader's care,
Heroes of Greece, and brothers of the war!

Of.

is full of beauties: The lively deſcription of their overſpreading the field, the noble boldneſs of the figure when Fame is repreſented in perſon ſhining at their head; the univerſal tumult ſucceeded by a ſolemn ſilence; and laſtly, the graceful riſing of Agamemnon, all contribute to caſt a majeſty on this part. In the paſſage of the ſceptre, Homer has found an artful and poetical manner of acquainting us with the high deſcent of Agamemnon, and celebrating the hereditary right of his family; as well as finely hinted the original of his power to be derived from heaven, in ſaying the ſceptre was firſt the gift of Jupiter.

Ver. 138. *And artful thus pronounce'd the ſpeech deſign'd.*] The remarks of Dionyſius upon this ſpeech I ſhall give the reader all together, though they lie ſcattered in his two diſcourſes; the ſecond of which is in a great degree but a repetition of the precepts and examples of the firſt. This happened, I believe, from his having compoſed them at diſtinct times, and upon different occaſions.

" It is an exquiſite piece of art, when you ſeem to aim at perſuading one thing, and at the ſame time enforce the contrary.

Of partial Jove with juſtice I complain,
And heav'nly oracles believ'd in vain.
A ſafe return was promis'd to our toils,
Renown'd, triumphant, and enrich'd with ſpoils.
Now

" This kind of rhetoric is of great uſe in all occaſions of dan-
" ger, and of this Homer has afforded a moſt powerful example
" in the oration of Agamemnon. It is a method perfectly won-
" derful, and even carries in it an appearance of abſurdity; for all
" that we generally eſteem the faults of oratory, by this means
" become the virtues of it. Nothing is looked upon as a greater
" error in a rhetorician than to allege ſuch arguments as either
" are eaſily anſwered or may be retorted upon himſelf; the former
" is a weak part, the latter a dangerous one; and Agamemnon here
" deſignedly deals in both. For it is plain, that if a man muſt
" not uſe weak arguments, or ſuch as may make againſt him,
" when he intends to perſuade the thing he ſays; then on the o-
" ther ſide, when he does not intend it, he muſt obſerve the con-
" trary proceeding, and make what are the faults of oratory in ge-
" neral, the excellencies of that oration in particular, or other-
" wiſe he will contradict his own intention, and perſuade the con-
" trary to what he means. Agamemnon begins with an argu-
" ment eaſily anſwered, by telling them that *Jupiter had promiſed to*
" *crown their arms with victory*. For if Jupiter had promiſed this,
" it was a reaſon for the ſtay in the camp. *But now* (ſays he) *Jove*
" *has deceived us, and we muſt return with ignominy*. This is an-
" other of the ſame kind, for it ſhews what a diſgrace it is to re-
" turn. What follows is of the ſecond ſort, and may be turned
" againſt him. *Jove will have it ſo*: for which they have only
" Agamemnon's word, but Jove's own promiſe to the contrary.
" *That God has overthrown many cities, and will yet overturn many o-*
" *thers*. This was a ſtrong reaſon to ſtay, and put their confi-
" dence in him. *It is ſhameful to have it told to all poſterity, that*
" *ſo many thouſand Greeks, after a war of ſo long continuance, at laſt*
" *returned home baffled and unſucceſsful*. All this might have been
" ſaid by a profeſt adverſary to the cauſe he pleads, and indeed is
" the ſame thing Ulyſſes ſays elſewhere in reproach of their flight.
" The concluſion evidently ſhews the intent of the ſpeaker. *Haſte*
" *then*; *let us fly*; φεύγωμεν, the word which of all others was
" moſt likely to prevail upon them to ſtay; the moſt open term
" of diſgrace he could poſſibly have uſed: it is the ſame which

Now ſhameful flight alone can ſave the hoſt,
Our blood, our treaſure, and our glory loſt.
So Jove decrees, reſiſtleſs lord of all!
At whoſe command whole empires riſe or fall:
He ſhakes the feeble props of human truſt,
And towns and armies humbles to the duſt.
What ſhame to Greece a fruitleſs war to wage,
Oh laſting ſhame in ev'ry future age!
Once great in arms, the common ſcorn we grow,
Repuls'd and baffled by a feeble foe.
So ſmall their number, that if wars were ceas'd,
And Greece triumphant held a gen'ral feaſt,
All rank'd by ten; whole decads when they dine
Muſt want a Trojan ſlave to pour the wine.

" Juno makes uſe of to Minerva, Minerva to Ulyſſes, and U-
" lyſſes again to the troops, to diſſuade their return; the ſame
" which Agamemnon himſelf had uſed to inſult Achilles, and
" which Homer never employs but with the mark of cowardice
" and infamy."

The ſame author farther obſerves, " That this whole oration
" has the air of being ſpoken in a paſſion. It begins with a
" ſtroke of the greateſt raſhneſs and impatience. *Jupiter has been*
" *unjuſt, heaven has deceived us.* This renders all he ſhall ſay of
" the leſs authority, at the ſame time that it conceals his own
" artifice; for his anger ſeems to account for the incongruities
" he utters." I could not ſuppreſs ſo fine a remark, though it falls out of the order of thoſe which precede it.

Ver. 155. *So ſmall their number,* &c.] This paſſage gives me occaſion to animadvert upon a computation of the number of the Trojans, which the learned Angelus Politian has offered at in his Preface to Homer. He thinks they were fifty thouſand without the auxiliaries, from the concluſion of the eighth Iliad, where it is ſaid there were a thouſand funeral piles of Trojans, and fifty men attending each of them. But that the auxiliaries are to be admitted into that number, appears plainly from this place: Agamemnon expreſsly diſtinguiſhes the native Trojans from the aids, and reckons but one to ten Grecians, at which eſtimate there could not be above ten thouſand Trojans. *See the notes on the catalogue.*

But other forces have our hopes o'erthrown,
And Troy prevails by armies not her own.
Now nine long years of mighty Jove are run,
Since firſt the labours of this war begun:
Our cordage torn, decay'd our veſſels lie,
And ſcarce enſure the wretched pow'r to fly.
Haſte then, for ever leave the Trojan wall!
Our weeping wives, our tender children call:
Love, duty, ſafety, ſummon us away,
'Tis Nature's voice, and Nature we obey.
Our ſhatter'd barks may yet tranſport us o'er,
Safe and inglorious, to our native ſhore.
Fly, Grecians, fly, your ſails and oars employ,
And dream no more of heav'n-defended Troy.
His deep deſign unknown, the hoſts approve
Atrides' ſpeech. The mighty numbers move.
So roll the billows to th' Icarian ſhore,
From eaſt and ſouth when winds begin to roar,
Burſt their dark manſions in the clouds, and ſweep
The whitening ſurface of the ruffled deep.
And as on corn when weſtern guſts deſcend,
Before the blaſt the lofty harveſts bend:

Ver. 163. ——————*Decay'd our veſſels lie,*
And ſcarce enſure the wretched pow'r to fly.]
This, and ſome other paſſages, are here tranſlated correſpondent to the general air and ſenſe of this ſpeech, rather than juſt to the letter. The telling them in this place how much their ſhipping was decayed, was a hint of their danger in returning, as Madam Dacier has remarked.

Ver. 175. *So roll the billows, &c.*] One may take notice that Homer in theſe two ſimilitudes has judiciouſly made choice of the two moſt wavering and inconſtant things in nature, to compare with the multitude; the *waves* and *ears of corn*. The firſt alludes to the noiſe and tumult of the people, in the breaking and rolling of the billows; the ſecond to their taking the ſame courſe, like corn bending one way; and both to the eaſineſs with which they are moved by every breath.

Thus

Thus o'er the field the moving hoſt appears,
With nodding plumes and groves of waving ſpears.
The gath'ring murmur ſpreads, their trampling feet
Beat the looſe ſands, and thicken to the fleet.
With long-reſounding cries they urge the train
To fit the ſhips, and launch into the main.
They toil, they ſweat, thick clouds of duſt ariſe,
The doubling clamours echo to the ſkies.
Ev'n then the Greeks had left the hoſtile plain,
And fate decreed the fall of Troy in vain;
But Jove's imperial queen their flight ſurvey'd,
And ſighing thus beſpoke the blue-ey'd maid.
Shall then the Grecians fly? Oh dire diſgrace!
And leave unpuniſh'd this perfidious race?
Shall Troy, ſhall Priam, and th' adult'rous ſpouſe,
In peace enjoy the fruits of broken vows!
And braveſt chiefs, in Helen's quarrel ſlain,
Lie unreveng'd on yon deteſted plain?
No: let my Greeks, unmov'd by vain alarms,
Once more refulgent ſhine in brazen arms.
Haſte, Goddeſs, haſte! the flying hoſt detain,
Nor let one ſail be hoiſted on the main.
Pallas obeys, and from Olympus' height
Swift to the ſhips precipitates her flight;
Ulyſſes, firſt in public cares, ſhe found,
For prudent counſel like the Gods renown'd:
Oppreſs'd with gen'rous grief the hero ſtood,
Nor drew his ſable veſſels to the flood.
And is it thus, divine Laertes' ſon!
Thus fly the Greeks (the martial maid begun)
Thus to their country bear their own diſgrace,
And fame eternal leave to Priam's race?
Shall beauteous Helen ſtill remain unfreed,
Still unrevenge'd a thouſand heroes bleed?
Haſte gen'rous Ithacus! prevent the ſhame,
Recal your armies, and your chiefs reclaim.

Your

Your own reſiſtleſs eloquence employ,
And to th' immortals truſt the fall of Troy.
The voice divine confeſt the warlike maid,
Ulyſſes heard, nor uninſpir'd obey'd:
Then meeting firſt Atrides, from his hand
Receiv'd th' imperial ſceptre of command,
Thus grace'd, attention and reſpect to gain,
He runs, he flies thro' all the Grecian train,
Each prince of name, or chief in arms approv'd,
He fir'd with praiſe, or with perſuaſion mov'd.
Warriors like you, with ſtrength and wiſdom bleſt,
By brave examples ſhould confirm the reſt.
The monarch's will not yet reveal'd appears;
He tries our courage, but reſents our fears.
Th' unwary Greeks his fury may provoke;
Not thus the king in ſecret council ſpoke.
Jove loves our chief, from Jove his honour ſprings,
Beware! for dreadful is the wrath of kings.
But if a clam'rous vile Plebeian roſe,
Him with reproof he check'd, or tam'd with blows.
Be ſtill, thou ſlave, and to thy betters yield;
Unknown alike in council and in field!
Ye Gods, what daſtards would our hoſt command!
Swept to the war, the lumber of a land.
Be ſilent, wretch, and think not here allow'd
That worſt of tyrants, an uſurping croud.
To one ſole monarch Jove commits the ſway;
His are the laws, and him let all obey.

Ver. 243. *To one ſole monarch.*] Thoſe perſons are under a miſtake, who would make this ſentence a praiſe of abſolute monarchy. Homer ſpeaks it only with regard to a general of an army during the time of his commiſſion. Nor is Agamemnon ſtiled *king of kings* in any other ſenſe, than as the reſt of the princes had given him the ſupreme authority over them in the ſiege.

With

With words like theſe the troops Ulyſſes rul'd,
The loudeſt ſilence'd, and the fierceſt cool'd.
Back to th' aſſembly roll the thronging train,
Deſert the ſhips, and pour upon the plain.
Murm'ring they move, as when old Ocean roars,
And heaves huge ſurges to the trembling ſhores:
The groaning banks are burſt with bellowing ſound,
The rocks remurmur, and the deeps rebound.
At length the tumult ſinks, the noiſes ceaſe,
And a ſtill ſilence lulls the camp to peace.
Therſites only clamour'd in the throng,
Loquacious, loud, and turbulent of tongue:

Ver. 255. *Therſites only.*] The ancients have aſcribed to Homer the firſt ſketch of Satiric or Comic poetry, of which ſort was his poem called *Margites*, as Ariſtotle reports. Though that piece be loſt, this character of Therſites may give us a taſte of his vein in that kind. But whether ludicrous deſcriptions ought to have place in the epic poem, has been juſtly queſtioned: Neither Virgil, nor any of the moſt approved ancients, have thought fit to admit them into their compoſitions of that nature; nor any of the beſt moderns, except Milton, whoſe fondneſs for Homer might be the reaſon of it. However, this is in its kind a very maſterly part, and our author has ſhewn great judgment in the particulars he has choſen to compoſe the picture of a pernicious creature of wit; the chief of which are a deſire of promoting laughter at any rate, and a contempt of his ſuperiors. And he ſums up the whole very ſtrongly, by ſaying that Therſites hated Achilles and Ulyſſes; in which, as Plutarch has remarked in his treatiſe of envy and hatred, he makes it the utmoſt completion of an ill character, to bear a malevolence to the beſt men. What is farther obſervable is, that Therſites is never heard of after this his firſt appearance: Such a ſcandalous character is to be taken no more notice of, than juſt to ſhew that it is deſpiſed. Homer has obſerved the ſame conduct with regard to the moſt deformed and the moſt beautiful perſon of his poem: for Nireus is thus mentioned once and no more throughout the Iliad. He places a worthleſs beauty and an ill-natured wit upon the ſame foot, and ſhews that the gifts of the body without thoſe of the mind are not more deſpicable, than thoſe of the mind itſelf without virtue.

Aw'd

Aw'd by no ſhame, by no reſpect controul'd,
In ſcandal buſy, in reproaches bold:
With witty malice ſtudious to defame;
Scorn all his joy, and laughter all his aim.
But chief he glory'd with licentious ſtile
To laſh the great, and monarchs to revile.
His figure ſuch as might his ſoul proclaim;
One eye was blinking, and one leg was lame:
His mountain-ſhoulders half his breaſt o'erſpread,
Thin hairs beſtrew'd his long miſhapen head.
Spleen to mankind his envious heart poſſeſt,
And much he hated all, but moſt the beſt.
Ulyſſes or Achilles ſtill his theme;
But royal ſcandal his delight ſupreme.
Long had he liv'd the ſcorn of ev'ry Greek,
Vext when he ſpoke, yet ſtill they heard him ſpeak.
Sharp was his voice; which in the ſhrilleſt tone,
Thus with injurious taunts attack'd the throne.
Amidſt the glories of ſo bright a reign,
What moves the great Atrides to complain?
'Tis thine whate'er the warrior's breaſt inflames,
The golden ſpoil, and thine the lovely dames.
With all the wealth our wars and blood beſtow,
Thy tents are crouded, and thy cheſts o'erflow,
Thus at full eaſe in heaps of riches roll'd,
What grieves the monarch? Is it thirſt of gold?

Ver. 275. *Amidſt the glories.*] It is remarked by Dionyſius Halicarnaſſus in his treatiſe of the Examination of Writers, that there could not be a better artifice thought on to recall the army to their obedience, than this of our author. When they were offended at their general in favour of Achilles, nothing could more waken Achilles's intereſt than to make ſuch a fellow as Therſites appear of his party, whoſe impertinence would give them a diſguſt of thinking or acting like him. There is no ſurer method to reduce generous ſpirits, than to make them ſee they are purſuing the ſame views with people of no merit, and ſuch whom they cannot forbear deſpiſing themſelves.

Say,

Say, ſhall we march with our unconquer'd pow'rs,
(The Greeks and I) to Ilion's hoſtile tow'rs,
And bring the race of royal baſtards here,
For Troy to ranſom at a price too dear?
But ſafer plunder thy own hoſt ſupplies;
Say, wouldſt thou ſeize ſome valiant leaders prize?
Or, if thy heart to gen'rous love be led,
Some captive fair, to bleſs thy kingly bed?
Whate'er our maſter craves, ſubmit we muſt,
Plagu'd with his pride, or puniſh'd for his luſt.
Oh women of Achaia! men no more!
Hence let us fly, and let him waſte his ſtore
In loves and pleaſures on the Phrygian ſhore.
We may be wanted on ſome buſy day,
When Hector comes: So great Achilles may:
From him he force'd the prize we jointly gave,
From him, the fierce, the fearleſs, and the brave:
And durſt he, as he ought, reſent that wrong,
This mighty tyrant were no tyrant long.
Fierce from his ſeat, at this, Ulyſſes ſprings,
In gen'rous vengeance of the king of kings.
With indignation ſparkling in his eyes,
He views the wretch, and ſternly thus replies.
Peace, factious monſter, born to vex the ſtate,
With wrangling talents form'd for foul debate:
Curb that impetuous tongue, nor raſhly vain,
And ſingly mad, aſperſe the ſov'reign reign.
Have we not known thee, ſlave! of all our hoſt,
The man who acts the leaſt, upbraids the moſt?
Think not the Greeks to ſhameful flight to bring,
Nor let thoſe lips profane the name of king.
For our return we truſt the heav'nly pow'rs;
Be that their care; to fight like men be ours.
But grant the hoſt with wealth the gen'ral load,
Except detraction, what haſt thou beſtow'd?

Suppoſe ſome hero ſhould his ſpoils reſign,
Art thou that hero, could thoſe ſpoils be thine?
Gods! let me periſh on this hateful ſhore,
And let theſe eyes behold my ſon no more;
If, on thy next offence, this hand forbear
To ſtrip thoſe arms thou ill deſerv'ſt to wear,
Expel the council where our princes meet,
And ſend thee ſcourge'd, and howling thro' the fleet.
He ſaid, and cow'ring as the daſtard bends,
The weighty ſceptre on his back deſcends:
On the round bunch the bloody tumours riſe;
The tears ſpring ſtarting from his haggard eyes:
Trembling he ſate, and ſhrunk in abject fears,
From his vile viſage wip'd the ſcalding tears.
While to his neighbour each expreſs'd his thought:
Ye Gods! what wonders has Ulyſſes wrought!
What fruits his conduct and his courage yield!
Great in the council, glorious in the field.
Gen'rous he riſes in the crown's defence,
To curb the factious tongue of inſolence.
Such juſt examples on offenders ſhown,
Sedition ſilence, and aſſert the throne.
'Twas thus the general voice the hero prais'd,
Who riſing, high th' imperial ſceptre rais'd:
The blue-ey'd Pallas, his celeſtial friend,
(In form a herald) bade the crouds attend.
Th' expecting crouds in ſtill attention hung,
To hear the wiſdom of his heav'nly tongue.

Ver. 326. *He ſaid, and cow'ring.*] The vile figure Therſites makes here is a good piece of groteſque; the pleaſure expreſſed by the ſoldiers at this action of Ulyſſes (notwithſtanding they are diſappointed by him of their hopes of returning) is agreeable to that generous temper, at once honeſt and thoughtleſs, which is commonly found in military men; to whom nothing is ſo odious as a daſtard, and who have not naturally the greateſt kindneſs for a wit.

Then

Then deeply thoughtful, pauſing ere he ſpoke,
His ſilence thus the prudent hero broke.
Unhappy monarch! whom the Grecian race
With ſhame deſerting, heap with vile diſgrace.
Not ſuch at Argos was their gen'rous vow,
Once all their voice, but ah! forgotten now:
Ne'er to return, was then the common cry,
Till Troy's proud ſtructures ſhould in aſhes lie.
Behold them weeping for their native ſhore!
What could their wives or helpleſs children more?
What heart but melts to leave the tender train,
And, one ſhort month, endure the wintry main?
Few leagues remov'd, we wiſh our peaceful ſeat,
When the ſhip toſſes, and the tempeſts beat:
Then well may this long ſtay provoke their tears,
The tedious length of nine revolving years.
Not for their grief the Grecian hoſt I blame;
But vanquiſh'd! baffled! oh eternal ſhame!

Ver. 348. *Unhappy monarch*, &c.] We have no ſooner ſeen Agamemnon excel in one ſort, but Ulyſſes is to ſhine no leſs in another oppoſite to it. When the ſtratagem of pretending to ſet ſail, had met with too ready a conſent from the people, his eloquence appears in all the forms of art. In his firſt ſpeech he had perſuaded the captains with mildneſs, telling them the people's glory depended upon them, and readily giving a turn to the firſt deſign, which had like to have been ſo dangerous, by repreſenting it only as a project of Agamemnon to diſcover the cowardly. In his ſecond, he had commanded the ſoldiers with bravery, and made them know what part they ſuſtained in the war. In his third, he had rebuked the ſeditious in the perſon of Therſites, by reproofs, threats, and actual chaſtiſement. And now in this fourth, when all are gathered together, he applies to them in topics which equally affect them all: he raiſes their hearts by putting them in mind of the promiſes of heaven, and thoſe propheſies, of which as they had ſeen the truth in the nine years delay, they might now expect the accompliſhment in the tenth year's ſucceſs: which is a full anſwer to what Agamemnon had ſaid of Jupiter's deceiving them.

Expect the time to Troy's deſtruction giv'n,
And try the faith of Chalcas and of heav'n.
What paſt at Aulis, Greece can witneſs bear,
And all who live to breathe this Phrygian air.
Beſide a fountain's ſacred brink we rais'd
Our verdant altars, and the victims blaz'd;
('Twas where the plane-tree ſpread its ſhades around)
The altars heav'd; and from the crumbling ground
A mighty dragon ſhot, of dire portent:
From Jove himſelf the dreadful ſign was ſent.
Strait to the tree his ſanguine ſpires he roll'd,
And curl'd around in many a winding fold.
The topmoſt branch a mother-bird poſſeſt;
Eight callow infants fill'd the moſſy neſt;
Herſelf the ninth; the ſerpent as he hung,
Stretch'd his black jaws, and cruſh'd the crying young;
While hov'ring near, with miſerable moan,
The drooping mother wail'd her children gone.
The mother laſt, as round the neſt ſhe flew,
Seiz'd by the beating wing, the monſter ſlew:
Nor long ſurviv'd, to marble turn'd he ſtands
A laſting progeny on Aulis' ſands.
Such was the will of Jove; and hence we dare
Truſt in his omen, and ſupport the war.
For while around we gaze with wond'ring eyes,
And trembling ſought the pow'rs with ſacrifice,
Full of his God, the rev'rend Chalcas cry'd,
Ye Grecian warriors! lay your fears aſide.
This wond'rous ſignal Jove himſelf diſplays,
Of long, long labours, but eternal praiſe.
As many birds as by the ſnake were ſlain,
So many years the toils of Greece remain;
But wait the tenth, for Ilion's fall decreed:
Thus ſpoke the prophet, thus the fates ſucceed.
Obey, ye Grecians! with ſubmiſſion wait,
Nor let your flight avert the Trojan fate.

He

He ſaid: the ſhores with loud applauſes ſound,
The hollow ſhips each deaf'ning ſhout rebound.
Then Neſtor thus—Theſe vain debates forbear,
Ye talk like children, not like heroes dare.

Where

Ver. 401. *Then Neſtor thus.*] Nothing is more obſervable than Homer's conduct of this whole incident; by what judicious and well-imagined degrees the army is reſtrained and wrought up to the deſires of the general. We have given the detail of all the methods Ulyſſes proceeded in: The activity of his character is now to be contraſted with the gravity of Neſtor's, who covers and ſtrengthens the other's arguments, and conſtantly appears through the poem a weighty cloſer of debates. The Greeks had already ſeen their general give way to his authority, in the diſpute with Achilles in the former book, and could expect no leſs than that their ſtay ſhould be concluded on by Agamemnon, as ſoon as Neſtor undertook that cauſe. For this was all they imagined his diſcourſe aimed at: but we ſhall find it had a farther deſign, from Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus. "There are two things (ſays that "excellent critic) worthy of admiration in the ſpeeches of Ulyſſes "and Neſtor, which are the different deſigns they ſpeak with, "and the different applauſes they receive. Ulyſſes had the acclamations of the army, and Neſtor the praiſe of Agamemnon. "One may inquire the reaſon, why he extols the latter preferably "to the former, when all that Neſtor alledges ſeems only a repetition of the ſame arguments which Ulyſſes had given before "him? It might be done in encouragement to the old man, in "whom it might raiſe a concern to find his ſpeech not followed "with ſo general an applauſe as the other's. But we are to refer "the ſpeech of Neſtor to that part of oratory which ſeems only "to confirm what another has ſaid, and yet ſuperinduces and carries a farther point. Ulyſſes and Neſtor both compare the "Greeks to children for their unmanly deſire to return home; "they both reproach them with the engagements and vows they "had paſt, and were now about to break; they both alledge the "proſperous ſigns and omens received from heaven. Notwithſtanding this, the end of their orations is very different. Ulyſſes's buſineſs was to detain the Grecians when they were upon "the point of flying: Neſtor finding that work done to his hands, "deſigned to draw them inſtantly to battle. This was the utmoſt

Where now are all your high reſolves at laſt?
Your leagues concluded, your engagements paſt?
Vow'd with libations and with victims then,
Now vaniſh'd like their ſmoke: the faith of men!
While uſeleſs words conſume th' unactive hours,
No wonder Troy ſo long reſiſts our pow'rs.
Riſe, great Atrides! and with courage ſway;
We march to war if thou direct the way.
But leave the few that dare reſiſt thy laws,
The mean deſerters of the Grecian cauſe,
To grudge the conqueſts mighty Jove prepares,
And view, with envy, our ſucceſsful wars.
On that great day when firſt the martial train,
Big with the fate of Ilion, plow'd the main;
Jove, on the right, a proſp'rous ſignal ſent,
And thunder rolling ſhook the firmament.
Encourage'd hence, maintain the glorious ſtrife,
Till ev'ry ſoldier graſp a Phrygian wife,
Till Helen's woes at full revenge'd appear,
And Troy's proud matrons render tear for tear.
Before that day, if any Greek invite
His country's troops to baſe, inglorious flight,
Stand forth that Greek! and hoiſt his ſail to fly;
And die the daſtard firſt, who dreads to die.
But now, O monarch! all thy chiefs adviſe:
Nor what they offer, thou thyſelf deſpiſe.
Among thoſe counſels, let not mine be vain;
In tribes and nations to divide thy train:
His ſep'rate troops let ev'ry leader call,
Each ſtrengthen each, and all encourage all.
What chief, or ſoldier, of the num'rous band,
Or bravely fights, or ill obeys command,

" Agamemnon had aimed at, which Neſtor's artifice brings to " paſs; for while they imagine, by all he ſays, that he is only " perſuading them to ſtay, they find themſelves unawares put into " order of battle, and led under their princes to fight."

When

When thus diſtinct they war, ſhall ſoon be known,
And what the cauſe of Ilion not o'erthrown;
If Fate reſiſts, or if our arms are ſlow,
If Gods above prevent, or men below.
To him the king: How much thy years excel
In arts of council, and in ſpeaking well!
O would the Gods, in love to Greece, decree
But ten ſuch ſages as they grant in thee;
Such wiſdom ſoon ſhould Priam's force deſtroy,
And ſoon ſhould fall the haughty tow'rs of Troy!
But Jove forbids, who plunges thoſe he hates
In fierce contention and in vain debates.
Now great Achilles from our aid withdraws,
By me provok'd; a captive maid the cauſe:
If e'er as friends we join, the Trojan wall
Muſt ſhake, and heavy will the vengeance fall!
But now, ye warriors, take a ſhort repaſt;
And, well refreſh'd, to bloody conflict haſte.
His ſharpen'd ſpear let ev'ry Grecian wield,
And ev'ry Grecian fix his brazen ſhield,
Let all excite the fiery ſteeds of war,
And all for combat fit the rattling car.
This day, this dreadful day, let each contend;
No reſt, no reſpite, till the ſhades deſcend;
Till darkneſs, or till death ſhall cover all:
Let the war bleed, and let the mighty fall!

Ver. 440. *How much thy years excel.*] Every one has obſerved how glorious an eulogium of wiſdom Homer has here given, where Agamemnon ſo far prefers it to valour, as to wiſh not for ten Ajax's, or Achilles's, but only for ten Neſtor's. For the reſt of this ſpeech, Dionyſius has ſummed it up as follows. "Aga-"memnon being now convinced the Greeks were offended at him, "on account of the departure of Achilles, pacifies them by a "generous confeſſion of his fault; but then aſſerts the character "of a ſupreme ruler, and with the air of command threatens the "diſobedient."

Till bath'd in ſweat be ev'ry manly breaſt,
With the huge ſhield each brawny arm depreſt.
Each aking nerve refuſe the lance to throw,
And each ſpent courſer at the chariot blow.
Who dares, inglorious, in his ſhips to ſtay,
Who dares to tremble on this ſignal day,
That wretch, too mean to fall by martial pow'r,
The birds ſhall mangle, and the dogs devour.
The monarch ſpoke; and ſtrait a murmur roſe,
Loud as the ſurges when the tempeſt blows,
That daſh'd on broken rocks tumultuous roar,
And foam and thunder on the ſtony ſhore.
Strait to the tents the troops diſperſing bend,
The fires are kindled, and the ſmokes aſcend;
With haſty feaſts they ſacrifice, and pray
T' avert the dangers of the doubtful day.
A ſteer of five year's age, large limb'd, and fed,
To Jove's high altars Agamemnon led:
There bade the nobleſt of the Grecian peers;
And Neſtor firſt, as moſt advance'd in years.
Next came Idomeneus and Tydeus' ſon,
Ajax the leſs, and Ajax Telamon;
Then wiſe Ulyſſes in his rank was place'd;
And Menelaus came unbid, the laſt.
The chiefs ſurround the deſtin'd beaſt, and take
The ſacred off'ring of the ſalted cake;
When thus the king prefers his ſolemn pray'r:
Oh thou! whoſe thunder rends the clouded air,
Who in the heav'n of heav'ns has fix'd thy throne,
Supreme of Gods! unbounded, and alone!

Ver, 485. *And Menelaus came unbid.*] The critics have entered into a warm diſpute, whether Menelaus was in the right or in the wrong, in coming uninvited: Some maintaining it the part of an impertinent or a fool to intrude upon another man's table; and others inſiſting upon the privilege a brother or a kinſman may claim in this caſe.

Here,

Hear, and before the burning ſun deſcends,
Before the night her gloomy veil extends,
Low in the duſt be laid yon hoſtile ſpires,
Be Priam's palace ſunk in Grecian fires,
In Hector's breaſt be plunge'd this ſhining ſword,
And ſlaughter'd heroes groan around their lord!
Thus pray'd the chief: his unavailing pray'r
Great Jove refus'd, and toſt in empty air:
The God averſe, while yet the fumes aroſe,
Prepar'd new toils, and doubled woes on woes.
Their pray'rs perform'd, the chiefs the rite purſue,
The barley ſprinkled, and the victim ſlew.
The limbs they ſever from th' incloſing hyde,
The thighs, ſelected to the Gods, divide.
On theſe, in double cauls involv'd with art,
The choiceſt morſels lie from ev'ry part.
From the cleft wood the crackling flames aſpire,
While the fat victim feeds the ſacred fire.
The thighs thus ſacrifice'd, and entrails dreſt,
Th' aſſiſtants part, transfix, and roaſt the reſt;
Then ſpread the tables, the repaſt prepare,
Each takes his ſeat, and each receives his ſhare.
Soon as the rage of hunger was ſuppreſt,
The gen'rous Neſtor thus the prince addreſt.
Now bid thy heralds ſound the loud alarms,
And call the ſquadrons ſheath'd in brazen arms:
Now ſeize th' occaſion, now the troops ſurvey,
And lead to war when Heav'n directs the way.
He ſaid; the monarch iſſu'd his commands;
Strait the loud heralds call the gath'ring bands.
The chiefs incloſe their king; the hoſts divide,
In tribes and nations rank'd on either ſide.
High in the midſt the blue-ey'd virgin flies;
From rank to rank ſhe darts her ardent eyes:

The dreadful Ægis, Jove's immortal ſhield,
Blaz'd on her arm, and lighten'd all the field:
Round the vaſt orb an hundred ſerpents roll'd,
Form'd the bright fringe, and ſeem'd to burn in gold.
With this each Grecian's manly breaſt ſhe warms,
Swells their bold hearts, and ſtrings their nervous arms,
No more they ſigh, inglorious to return,
But breathe revenge, and for the combat burn.

As on ſome mountain, thro' the lofty grove,
The crackling flames aſcend, and blaze above,

The

Ver. 526. *The dreadful Ægis, Jove's immortal ſhield,*] Homer does not expreſsly call it a ſhield in this place, but it is plain from ſeveral other paſſages that it was ſo. In the fifth Iliad, this Ægis is deſcribed with a ſublimity that is inexpreſſible. The figure of the Gorgon's head upon it is there ſpecified, which will juſtify the mention of the ſerpents in the tranſlation here: the verſes are remarkably ſonorous in the original. The image of the goddeſs of battles blazing with her immortal ſhield before the army, inſpiring every hero, and aſſiſting to range the troops, is agreeable to the bold painting of our author. And the encouragement of a divine power ſeemed no more than was requiſite, to change ſo totally the diſpoſitions of the Grecians, as to make them now more ardent for the combat than they were before deſirous of a return. This finiſhes the conqueſt of their inclinations, in a manner at once wonderfully poetical, and correſpondent to the moral which is every where ſpread through Homer, that nothing is entirely brought about but by the divine aſſiſtance.

Ver. 534. *As on ſome mountain,* &c.] The imagination of Homer was ſo vaſt and ſo lively, that whatſoever objects preſented themſelves before him, impreſſed their images ſo forcibly, that he poured them forth in compariſons equally ſimple and noble; without forgetting any circumſtance which could inſtruct the reader, and make him ſee thoſe objects in the ſame ſtrong light wherein he ſaw them himſelf. And in this, one of the principal beauties of poetry conſiſts; Homer, on the ſight of the march of this numerous army, gives us five ſimiles in a breath, but all entirely different. The firſt regards the ſplendour of their armour, as a fire, etc. The ſecond the various movements of ſo many thouſands

The fires expanding as the winds ariſe,
Shoot their long beams, and kindle half the ſkies:
So from the poliſh'd arms, and brazen ſhields,
A gleamy ſplendour flaſh'd along the fields.
Not leſs their number than th' embody'd cranes,
Or milk-white ſwans in Aſius' watry plains,
That o'er the windings of Cayſter's ſprings,
Stretch their long necks, and clap their ruſtling wings,
Now tow'r aloft, and courſe in airy rounds;
Now light with noiſe; with noiſe the field reſounds.
Thus num'rous and confus'd, extending wide,
The legions croud Scamander's flow'ry ſide;
With ruſhing troops the plains are cover'd o'er,
And thund'ring footſteps ſhake the ſounding ſhore:
Along the river's level meads they ſtand,
Thick as in ſpring the flow'rs adorn the land,
Or leaves the trees; or thick as inſects play,
The wand'ring nation of a ſummer's day,

ſands before they can arrange themſelves in battle-array, like the ſwans, &c. The third reſpects their number, as the leaves or flowers, &c. The fourth the ardour with which they run to the combat, like the legions of inſects, &c. And the fifth the obedience and exact diſcipline of the troops, ranged without confuſion under their leaders, as flocks under their ſhepherds. This fecundity and variety can never be enough admired. Dacier.

Ver. 552. *Or thick as inſects play.*] This ſimile tranſlated literally runs thus; "As the numerous troops of flies about a ſhepherd's "cottage in the ſpring, when the milk moiſtens the pails; ſuch "numbers of Greeks ſtood in the field againſt the Trojans, "deſiring their deſtruction." The lowneſs of this image, in compariſon with thoſe which precede it, will naturally ſhock a modern critic, and would ſcarce be forgiven in a poet of theſe times. The utmoſt a tranſlator can do is to heighten the expreſſion, ſo as to render the diſparity leſs obſervable; which is endeavoured here, and in other places. If this be done ſucceſsfully, the reader is ſo far from being offended at a low idea, that it raiſes his ſurpriſe to find it grown great in the poet's hands, of which we have frequent inſtances in Virgil's Georgics.

That

That drawn by milky ſteams, at ev'ning hours,
In gather'd ſwarms ſurround the rural bow'rs:
From pail to pail with buſy murmur run
The gilded legions glitt'ring in the ſun.
So throng'd, ſo cloſe, the Grecian ſquadrons ſtood
In radiant arms, and thirſt for Trojan blood.
Each leader now his ſcatter'd force conjoins
In cloſe array, and forms the deep'ning lines.
Not with more eaſe, the ſkilful ſhepherd ſwain
Collects his flock from thouſands on the plain.
The king of kings, majeſtically tall,
Tow'rs o'er his armies, and outſhines them all:
Like ſome proud bull that round the paſtures leads
His ſubject-herds, the monarch of the meads.
Great as the Gods, th' exalted chief was ſeen,
His ſtrength like Neptune, and like Mars his mien,
Jove o'er his eyes celeſtial glories ſpread,
And dawning conqueſt play'd around his head.

Say, virgins, ſeated round the throne divine,
All-knowing Goddeſſes! immortal nine!
Since earth's wide regions, heav'n's unmeaſur'd height,
And hell's abyſs, hide nothing from your ſight,
(We, wretched mortals! loſt in doubts below,
But gueſs by rumour, and but boaſt we know)

Ver. 572. *Say, virgins.*] It is hard to conceive any addreſs more ſolemn, any opening to a ſubject more noble and magnificent, than this invocation of Homer before his catalogue. That omnipreſence he gives to the muſes, their poſt in the higheſt heaven, their comprehenſive ſurvey through the whole extent of the creation, are circumſtances greatly imagined. Nor is any thing more perfectly fine, or exquiſitely moral, than the oppoſition of the extenſive knowledge of the divinities on the one ſide, to the blindneſs and ignorance of mankind on the other. The greatneſs and importance of his ſubject is highly raiſed by his exalted manner of declaring the difficulty of it, *Not though my lungs were braſs*, &c. and by the air he gives, as if what follows were immediately inſpired, and no leſs than the joint labour of all the muſes.

Oh

Oh ſay what heroes, fir'd by thirſt of fame,
Or urge'd by wrongs, to Troy's deſtruction came?
To count them all, demands a thouſand tongues,
A throat of braſs and adamantine lungs.
Daughters of Jove, aſſiſt! inſpir'd by you
The mighty labour dauntleſs I purſue:
What crouded armies, from what climes they bring,
Their names, their numbers, and their chiefs I ſing.

The CATALOGUE *of the* SHIPS.

THE hardy warriors whom Bœotia bred,
Penelius, Leitus, Prothoënor led:
With theſe Arceſilaus and Clonius ſtand,
Equal in arms, and equal in command.
Theſe head the troops that rocky Aulis yields,
And Eteon's hills, and Hyrie's watry fields,
And Schœnos, Scholos, Grea near the main,
And Mycaleſſia's ample piny plain.
Thoſe who in Peteon or Ileſion dwell,
Or Harma where Apollo's prophet fell;
Heleon and Hyle, which the ſprings o'erflow;
And Medeon lofty, and Ocalea low;
Or in the meads of Holiartus ſtray,
Or Theſpia ſacred to the God of day.
Onchestus, Neptune's celebrated groves;
Copæ, and Thiſbe, fam'd for ſilver doves,

Ver. 586. *The hardy warriors.*] The catalogue begins in this place, which I forbear to treat of at preſent: only I muſt acknowledge here that the tranſlation has not been exactly punctual to the order in which Homer places his towns. There is not to my remembrance any place throughout this catalogue omitted; a liberty which Mr. Dryden has made no difficulty to take, and to confeſs, in his Virgil. But a more ſcrupulous care was owing to Homer, on account of that wonderful exactneſs and unequalled diligence, which he has particularly ſhewn in this part of his work.

For flocks Erythræ, Glifſa for the vine;
Platea green, and Niſa the divine.
And they whom Thebe's well-built walls incloſe,
Where Myde, Eutreſis, Corone roſe;
And Arne rich, with purple harveſts crown'd;
And Anthedon, Bœotia's utmoſt bound.
Full fifty ſhips they ſend, and each conveys
Twice ſixty warriors thro' the foaming ſeas.
To theſe ſucceed Aſpledon's martial train,
Who plow the ſpacious Orchomenian plain.
Two valiant brothers rule th' undaunted throng,
Ialmen and Aſcalaphus the ſtrong:
Sons of Aſtyoche, the heav'nly fair,
Whoſe virgin charms ſubdu'd the God of war:
(In Actor's court as ſhe retir'd to reſt,
The ſtrength of Mars the bluſhing maid compreſt)
Their troops in thirty ſable veſſels ſweep
With equal oars, the hoarſe reſounding deep.
The Phocians next in forty barks repair,
Epiſtrophus and Schedius head the war.
From thoſe rich regions where Cephiſſus leads
His ſilver current thro' the flow'ry meads;
From Panopea, Chryſa the divine,
Where Anemoria's ſtately turrets ſhine,
Where Pytho, Daulis, Cypariſſus ſtood,
And fair Lilea views the riſing flood.
Theſe range'd in order on the floating tide,
Cloſe on the left, the bold Bœotians ſide.
Fierce Ajax led the Locrian ſquadons on,
Ajax the leſs, Oileus' valiant ſon;
Skill'd to direct the flying dart aright;
Swift in purſuit, and active in the fight.
Him, as their chief, the choſen troops attend,
Which Beſſa, Thronus, and rich Cynos ſend:

Opus,

Opus, Calliarus, and Scarphe's bands;
And thoſe who dwell where pleaſing Augia ſtands,
And where Boagrius floats the lowly lands,
Or in fair Tarphe's ſylvan ſeats reſide;
In forty veſſels cut the yielding tide.
Eubœa next her martial ſons prepares,
And ſends the brave Abantes to the wars:
Breathing revenge in arms they take their way
From Chalcis' walls, and ſtrong Eretria;
Th' Iſteian fields for gen'rous vines renown'd,
The fair Cariſtos, and the Styrian ground;
Where Dios from her tow'rs o'erlooks the plain,
And high Cerinthus views the neighb'ring main.
Down their broad ſhoulders falls a length of hair;
Their hands diſmiſs not the long lance in air;
But with portended ſpears in fighting fields,
Pierce the tough cors'lets and the brazen ſhields.
Twice twenty ſhips tranſport the warlike bands,
Which bold Elphenor, fierce in arms, commands.
Full fifty more from Athens ſtem the main,
Led by Meneſtheus thro' the liquid plain,
(Athens the fair, where great Erectheus ſway'd,
That ow'd his nurture to the blue-ey'd maid,
But from the teeming furrow took his birth,
The mighty offspring of the foodful earth.
Him Pallas place'd amidſt her wealthy fane,
Ador'd with ſacrifice and oxen ſlain;
Where as the years revolve, her altars blaze,
And all the tribes reſound the Goddeſs' praiſe.)

Ver. 649. *Down their broad ſhoulders*, &c.] It was the cuſtom of theſe people to ſhave the fore-part of their heads, which they did, that their enemies might not take the advantage of ſeizing them by the hair: the hinder part they let grow, as a valiant race that would never turn their backs. Their manner of fighting was hand to hand, without quitting their javelins (in the way of our pike-men).

No chief like thee, Meneſtheus! Greece could yield,
To marſhal armies in the duſty field,
Th' extended wings of battle to diſplay,
Or cloſe th' embody'd hoſt in firm array.
Neſtor alone, imp.ov'd by length of days,
For martial conduct bore an equal praiſe.
With theſe appear the Salaminian bands,
Whom the gigantic Telamon commands;
In twelve black ſhips to Troy they ſteer their courſe,
And with the great Athenians join their forces.
Next move to war the gen'rous Argive train
From high Trœzene, and Maſeta's plain,
And fair Ægina circled by the main:
Whom ſtrong Tyrinthe's lofty walls ſurround,
And Epidaure with viny harveſts crown'd:
And where fair Aſinen and Hermion ſhow
Their cliffs above, and ample bay below.
Theſe by the brave Euryalus were led,
Great Sthenelus, and greater Diomed,
But chief Tydides bore the ſov'reign ſway;
In fourſcore barks they plow the watry way.
The proud Mycenæ arms her martial pow'rs,
Cleone, Corinth, with imperial tow'rs,
Fair Aræthyrea, Ornia's fruitful plain,
And Ægion, and Adraſtus' ancient reign:
And thoſe who dwell along the ſandy ſhore,
And where Pellene yields her fleecy ſtore,
Where Helice and Hypereſia lie,
And Gonoeſſa's ſpires ſalute the ſky.
Great Agamemnon rules the num'rous band,
A hundred veſſels in long order ſtand,
And crouded nations wait his dread command.
High on the deck the king of men appears,
And his refulgent arms in triumph wears;
Proud of his hoſt, unrival'd in his reign,
In ſilent pomp he moves along the main.

His

His brother follows, and to vengeance warms
The hardy Spartans, exercis'd in arms:
Phares and Bryſia's valiant troops, and thoſe
Whom Lacedæmon's lofty hills incloſe:
Or Meſſe's tow'rs for ſilver doves renown'd,
Amyclæ, Laas, Augia's happy ground,
And thoſe whom Oetylos' low walls contain,
And Helos on the margin of the main:
Theſe, o'er the bending ocean, Helen's cauſe
In ſixty ſhips with Menelaus draws:
Eager and loud from man to man he flies,
Revenge and fury flaming in his eyes;
While vainly fond, in fancy oft he hears
The fair-one's grief, and ſees her falling tears.
In ninety ſail, from Pylos' ſandy coaſt,
Neſtor the ſage conducts his choſen hoſt;
From Amphigenia's ever-fruitful land;
Where Æpy high, and little Pteleon ſtand;
Where beauteous Arene her ſtructures ſhows,
And Thryon's walls Alpheus' ſtreams incloſe:
And Dorion, fam'd for Thamyris' diſgrace,
Superior once of all the tuneful race,
'Till vain of mortals empty praiſe, he ſtrove
To match the ſeed of cloud-compelling Jove!
Too daring bard! whoſe unſucceſsful pride
Th' immortal Muſes in their art defy'd.
Th' avenging Muſes of the light of day
Depriv'd his eyes, and ſnatch'd his voice away.

Ver. 711. *Eager and loud from man to man he flies.*] The figure Menelaus makes in this place is remarkably diſtinguiſhed from the reſt, and ſufficient to ſhew his concern in the war was perſonal, while the others acted only for intereſt or glory in general. No leader in all the liſt is repreſented thus eager and paſſionate; he is louder than them all in his exhortations; more active in running among the troops; and inſpirited with the thoughts of revenge, which he ſtill increaſes with the ſecret imagination of Helen's repentance. This behaviour is finely imagined.

No more his heav'nly voice was heard to ſing.
His hand no more awak'd the ſilver ſtring.
When under high Cyllene, crown'd with wood,
The ſhaded tomb of old Æpytus ſtood;
From Ripe, Stratie, Tegea's bordering towns,
The Phenean fields, and Orchomenian downs,
Where the fat herds in plenteous paſture rove;
And Stymphelus with her ſurrounding grove,
Parrhaſia, on her ſnowy cliffs reclin'd,
And high Eniſpe ſhook by wintry wind,
And fair Mantinia's ever-pleaſing ſite;
In ſixty ſail th' Arcadian bands unite.
Bold Agapenor, glorious at their head,
(Ancæus' ſon) the mighty ſquadron led.
Their ſhips, ſupply'd by Agamemnon's care,
Thro' roaring ſeas the wond'ring warriors bear;
The firſt to battle on th' appointed plain,
But new to all the dangers of the main.
Thoſe, where fair Elis and Buprafium join;
Whom Hyrmin, here, and Myrſinus confine,
And bounded there, where o'er the valleys roſe
Th' Olenian rock; and where Aliſium flows;
Beneath four chiefs (a num'rous army) came;
The ſtrength and glory of th' Epean name.
In ſep'rate ſquadrons theſe their train divide,
Each leads ten veſſels thro' the yielding tide.
One was Amphimachus, and Thalphius one;
(Eurytus' this, and that Teatus' ſon).

Ver. 746. *Now to all the dangers of the main.*] The Arcadians being an inland people, were unſkilled in navigation, for which reaſon Agamemnon furniſhed them with ſhipping. From hence, and from the laſt line of the deſcription of the ſceptre, where he is ſaid to preſide over many iſlands, Thucydides takes occaſion to obſerve, that the power of Agamemnon was ſuperior to the reſt of the princes of Greece, on account of his naval forces, which had rendered him maſter of the ſea. Thucyd. lib. 1.

Diores

Diores ſprung from Amarynceus' line;
And great Prolyxenus, of force divine.
But thoſe who view fair Elis o'er the ſeas
From the bleſt iſlands of th' Echinades,
In forty veſſels under Meges move,
Begot by Phyleus the belov'd of Jove.
To ſtrong Dulichium from his ſire he fled,
And thence to Troy his hardy warriors led.
Ulyſſes follow'd thro' the watry road,
A chief, in wiſdom equal to a God.
With thoſe whom Cephalenia's iſle inclos'd,
Or till their fields along the coaſt oppos'd;
Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Where high Neritos ſhakes his waving woods,
Where Ægilipa's rugged ſides are ſeen,
Crocylia rocky, and Zacynthus green.
Theſe in twelve galleys with vermilion prores,
Beneath his conduct fought the Phrygian ſhores.
Thoas came next, Andræmon's valiant ſon,
From Pleuron's walls, and chalky Calydon,
And rough Pylene, and th' Olenian ſteep,
And Chalcis beaten by the rolling deep.
He led the warriors from th' Ætolian ſhore,
For now the ſons of Oeneus were no more!
The glories of the mighty race were fled!
Oeneus himſelf, and Meleager dead!
To Thoas' care now truſt the martial train,
His forty veſſels follow thro' the main.
Next eighty barks the Cretan king commands,
Of Gnoſſus, Lyctus, and Gortyna's bands,
And thoſe who dwell where Rhytion's domes ariſe.
Or white Lycaſtus glitters to the ſkies,
Or where by Phæſtus ſilver Jardan runs;
Crete's hundred cities pour forth all her ſons.
Theſe march'd, Idomeneus, beneath thy care.
And Merion, dreadful as the God of war.

Tlepolemus,

Tlepolemus, the ſon of Hercules,
Led nine ſwift veſſels thro' the foamy ſeas;
From Rhodes with everlaſting ſunſight bright,
Jalyſſus, Lindus, and Camirus white.
His captive mother fierce Alcides bore
From Ephyr's walls, and Selle's winding ſhore,
Where mighty town's in ruins ſpread the plain,
And ſaw their blooming warriors early ſlain.
The hero, when to manly years he grew,
Alcides' uncle, old Licymnius, ſlew;
For this, conſtrain'd to quit his native place,
And ſhun the vengeance of th' Herculean race,
A fleet he built, and with a num'rous train
Of willing exiles, wander'd o'er the main;
Where many ſeas, and many ſuff'rings paſt,
On happy Rhodes the chief arriv'd at laſt:
There in three tribes divides his native band,
And rules them peaceful in a foreign land;
Encreas'd and proſper'd in their new abodes,
By mighty Jove, the ſire of men and Gods;
With joy they ſaw the growing empire riſe,
And ſhow'rs of wealth deſcending from the ſkies.

Three ſhips with Nireus fought the Trojan ſhore,
Nireus, whom Aglae to Charopus bore,
Nireus, in faultleſs ſhape and blooming grace,
The lovelieſt youth of all the Grecian race;

Ver. 815. *Three ſhips with Nireus.*] This leader is no where mentioned but in theſe lines, and is an exception to the obſervation of Macrobius, that all the perſons of the catalogue make their appearance afterwards in the poem. Homer himſelf gives us the reaſon, becauſe Nireus had but a ſmall ſhare of worth and valour; His quality only gave him a privilege to be named among men. The poet has cauſed him to be remembered no leſs than Achilles or Ulyſſes, but yet in no better manner than he deſerved, whoſe only qualification was his beauty: it is by a bare repetition of his name three times, which juſt leaves ſome impreſſion of him on the mind of the reader.

Pelides

Pelides only match'd his early charms;
But few his troops, and ſmall his ſtrength in arms.
Next thirty galleys cleave the liquid plain,
Of thoſe, Calydnæ's ſea-girt iſles contain;
With them the youth of Niſyrus repair,
Caſus the ſtrong, and Crapathus the fair;
Cos, where Eurypylus poſſeſt the ſway,
'Till great Alcides made the realms obey:
Theſe Antiphus and bold Phidippus bring,
Sprung from the God by Theſſalus the king.
Now, Muſe, recount Pelaſgic Argos' pow'rs,
From Alos, Alope, and Trechin's tow'rs;
From Phthia's ſpacious vales; and Hella, bleſt
With female beauty far beyond the reſt.
Full fifty ſhips beneath Achilles' care,
Th' Achaians, Myrmidons, Hellenians bear;
Theſſalians all, tho' various in their name,
The ſame their nation, and their chief the ſame.
But now inglorious, ſtretch'd along the ſhore,
They hear the brazen voice of war no more;
No more the foe they face in dire array;
Cloſe in his fleet their angry leader lay;
Since fair Briſeis from his arms was torn,
The nobleſt ſpoil from ſack'd Lyrneſſus borne,
Then, when the chief the Theban walls o'erthrew,
And the bold ſons of great Evenus ſlew.
There mourn'd Achilles, plunge'd in depth of care,
But ſoon to riſe in ſlaughter, blood and war.
To theſe the youth of Phylace ſucceed,
Itona, famous for her fleecy breed,
And graſſy Pteleon deck'd with chearful greens,
The bow'rs of Ceres, and the ſylvan ſcenes,
Sweet Pyrrhaſus, with blooming flourets crown'd,
And Antron's watry dens, and cavern'd ground.
Theſe own'd as chief Protefilas the brave,
Who now lay ſilent in the gloomy grave:

The

The firſt who boldly touch'd the Trojan ſhore,
And dy'd a Phrygian lance with Grecian gore;
There lies, far diſtant from his native plain;
Unfiniſh'd his proud palaces remain,
And his ſad conſort beats her breaſt in vain.
His troops in forty ſhips Podarces led,
Iphiclus' ſon, and brother to the dead;
Nor he unworthy to command the hoſt;
Yet ſtill they mourn'd their ancient leader loſt.
The men who Glaphyra's fair ſoil partake,
Where hills encircle Bœbe's lowly lake,
Where Pheræ hears the neighb'ring waters fall,
Or proud Iolcus lifts her airy wall,
In ten black ſhips embark'd for Ilion's ſhore,
With bold Eumelus, whom Alceſte bore:
All Pelias' race Alceſte far outſhin'd,
The grace and glory of the beauteous kind.
The troops Methone, or Thaumacia yields,
Olizon's rocks, or Mileboea's fields,
With Philoctetes ſail'd, whoſe matchleſs art
From the tough bow directs the feather'd dart.
Sev'n were his ſhips; each veſſel fifty row,
Skill'd in his ſcience of the dart and bow.
But he lay raging on the Lemnian ground,
A pois'nous Hydra gave the burning wound;
There groan'd the chief in agonizing pain,
Whom Greece at length ſhall wiſh, nor wiſh in vain.
His forces Medon led from Lemnos' ſhore,
Oileus' ſon, whom beauteous Rhena bore.

Ver. 871. *The grace and glory of the beauteous kind.*] He gives Alceſtis this elogy of the glory of her ſex, for her conjugal piety, who died to preſerve the life of her huſband Admetus. Euripides has a tragedy on this ſubject, which abounds in the moſt maſterly ſtrokes of tenderneſs: in particular the firſt act, which contains the deſcription of her preparation for death, and of her behaviour in it, can never be enough admired.

Th'

Th' Oechalion race, in thoſe high tow'rs contain'd;
Where once Eurytus in proud triumph reign'd,
Or where her humbler turrets Tricca rears,
Or where Ithome, rough with rocks, appears;
In thirty ſail the ſparkling waves divide,
Which Podalirius and Machaon guide.
To theſe his ſkill their *parent-god imparts,
Divine profeſſors of the healing arts.
The bold Ormenian and Aſterian bands
In forty barks Eurypylus commands,
Where Titan hides his hoary head in ſnow,
And where Hyperia's ſilver fountains flow.
Thy troops, Argiſſa, Polypœtes leads,
And Eleon, ſhelter'd by Olympus' ſhades,
Gyrtone's warriors; and where Orthe lies,
And Olooſſon's chalky cliffs ariſe.
Sprung from Pirithous of immortal race,
The fruit of fair Hippodame's embrace,
(That day, when hurl'd from Pelion's cloudy head,
To diſtant dens the ſhaggy Centaurs fled)
With Polypœtes joined in equal ſway
Leonteus leads, and forty ſhips obey.
In twenty ſail the bold Perrhæbians came
Crom Cyphus, Guneus was their leader's name.

* Æſculapius.

Ver. 906. *In twenty ſhips the bold Perrhæbians came.*] I cannot tell whether it be worth obſerving, that, except Ogilby, I have not met with one tranſlator who has exactly preſerved the number of the ſhips. Chapman puts eighteen under Eumelus inſtead of eleven: Hobbes but twenty under Aſcalaphus and Ialmen inſtead of thirty, and but thirty under Menelaus inſtead of ſixty: Valterie (the former French tranſlator) has given Agapenor forty for ſixty, and Neſtor forty for ninety: Madam Dacier gives Neſtor but eighty. I muſt confeſs this tranſlation not to have been quite ſo exact as Ogilby's, having cut off one from the number of Eumelus's ſhips, and two from thoſe of Guneus: *eleven* and *two and twenty* would ſound but oddly in Engliſh verſe, and a poem contracts a littleneſs by inſiſting upon ſuch trivial niceties.

With

With theſe the Enians join'd, and thoſe who freeze
Where cold Dodona lifts her holy trees;
Or where the pleaſing Titareſius glides,
And into Peneus rolls his eaſy tides;
Yet o'er the ſilver ſurface pure they flow,
The ſacred ſtream unmix'd with ſtreams below,
Sacred and awful! From the dark abodes
Styx pours them forth, the dreadful oath of Gods!
Laſt under Prothous the Magneſians ſtood,
Prothous the ſwift, of old Tenthredon's blood;
Who dwell where Pelion, crown'd with piny boughs,
Obſcures the glade, and nods his ſhaggy brows:
Or where thro' flow'ry Tempe Peneus ſtray'd,
(The region ſtretch'd beneath his mighty ſhade)
In forty ſable barks they ſtemm'd the main;
Such were the chiefs, and ſuch the Grecian train.
Say next, O muſe! of all Achaia breeds,
Who braveſt fought, or rein'd the nobleſt ſteeds?
Eumelus' mares were foremoſt in the chace,
As eagles fleet, and of Pheretian race;
Bred where Pieria's fruitful fountains flow,
And train'd by him who bears the ſilver bow.
Fierce in the fight, their noſtrils breath'd a flame,
Their height, their colour, and their age the ſame;
O'er fields of death they whirl the rapid car,
And break the ranks, and thunder thro' the war.
Ajax in arms the firſt renown acquir'd,
While ſtern Achilles in his wrath retir'd:
(His was the ſtrength that mortal might exceeds,
And his, th' unrival'd race of heavenly ſteeds)
But Thetis' ſon now ſhines in arms no more;
His troops, neglected on the ſandy ſhore,

In

Ver. 939. *His troops, etc.*] The image in theſe lines of the amuſe-

ments

In empty air their ſportive jav'lins throw,
Or whirl the diſk, or bend an idle bow:
Unſtain'd with blood his cover'd chariots ſtand;
Th' immortal courſers graze along the ſtrand;
But the brave chiefs th' inglorious life deplor'd,
And wand'ring o'er the camp, requir'd their lord.
The ſhining armies ſweep along the ground;
Now, like a deluge, cov'ring all around,
Swift as a flood of fire, when ſtorms ariſe,
Floats the wide field, and blazes to the ſkies.
Earth groan'd beneath them; as when angry Jove
Hurls down the forky lightning from above,
On Arime when he the thunder throws,
And fires Typhœus with redoubled blows,
Where Typhon, preſt beneath the burning load,
Still feels the fury of th' avenging God.
But various Iris, Jove's commands to bear,
Speeds on the wings of winds thro' liquid air;
In Priam's porch the Trojan chiefs ſhe found,
The old conſulting, and the youths around.

ments of the Myrmidons, while Achilles detained them from the fight, has an exquiſite propriety in it. Though they are not in action, their very diverſions are military, and a kind of exerciſe of arms. The covered chariots, and feeding horſes, make a natural part of the picture; and nothing is finer than the manly concern of the captains, who, as they are ſuppoſed more ſenſible of glory than the ſoldiers, take no ſhare in their diverſions, but wander ſorrowfully round the camp, and lament their being kept from the battle.

Ver. 950. *As when angry Jove.*] The compariſon preceding this, of a fire which runs through the corn, and blazes to heaven, had expreſſed at once the dazzling of their arms and the ſwiftneſs of their march. After which, Homer having mentioned the ſound of their feet, ſuperadds another ſimile, which comprehends both the ideas of the brightneſs and the noiſe: for here (ſays Euſtathius) the earth appears to burn and groan at the ſame time. Indeed the firſt of theſe ſimiles is ſo full and ſo noble, that it ſcarce ſeemed poſſible to be exceeded by any image drawn from nature.

Polites' ſhape, the monarch's ſon, ſhe choſe,
Who from Æſetes' tomb obſerv'd the foes,
High on the mound; from whence in proſpect lay
The fields, the tents, the navy, and the bay.
In this diſſembled form, ſhe haſtes to bring
Th' unwelcome meſſage to the Phrygian king.
Ceaſe to conſult, the time for action calls,
War, horrid war, approaches to your walls!
Aſſembled armies oft' have I beheld;
But ne'er till now ſuch numbers charge'd a field.
Thick as autumnal leaves, or driving ſand,
The moving ſquadrons blacken all the ſtrand.
Thou, godlike Hector! all thy force employ,
Aſſemble all th' united bands of Troy;
In juſt array let ev'ry leader call
The foreign troops: this day demands them all.
The voice divine the mighty chief alarms;
The council breaks, the warriors ruſh to arms.
The gates unfolding pour forth all their train,
Nations on nations fill the duſky plain,
Men, ſteeds, and chariots ſhake the trembling ground;
The tumult thickens, and the ſkies reſound,
Amidſt the plain in ſight of Ilion ſtands
A riſing mount, the work of human hands;
(This for Myrinne's tomb th' immortals know,
Tho' call'd Bateia in the world below)
Beneath their chiefs in martial order here,
Th' auxiliar troops and Trojan hoſts appear.
The godlike Hector, high above the reſt,
Shakes his huge ſpear, and nods his plumy creſt:
In throngs around his native bands repair,
And groves of lances glitter in the air.
Divine Æneas brings the Dardan race,
Anchiſes' ſon, by Venus' ſtol'n embrace,
Born in the ſhades of Ida's ſecret grove,
(A mortal mixing with the queen of love)

Archilochus and Acamas divide
The warrior's toils, and combat by his ſide.
Who fair Zeleia's wealthy valleys till,
Faſt by the foot of Ida's ſacred hill;
Or drink, Æſepus, of thy ſable flood;
Were led by Pandarus, of royal blood.
To whom his art Apollo deign'd to ſhow,
Grace'd with the preſent of his ſhafts and bow.
From rich Apæſus and Adreſtia's tow'rs,
High Teree's ſummits, and Pityea's bow'rs;
From theſe the congregated troops obey
Young Amphius and Adraſtus' equal ſway;
Old Merops' ſons; whom, ſkill'd in fates to come,
The ſire forewarn'd, and propheſy'd their doom:
Fate urge'd them on! the ſire forewarn'd in vain,
They ruſh'd to war, and periſh'd on the plain.
From Practius' ſtream, Percote's paſture lands,
And Seſtos and Abydos's neighb'ring ſtrands,
From great Ariſba's walls and Selle's coaſt,
Aſius Hyrtacides conducts his hoſt:
High on his car he ſhakes the flowing reins,
His fiery courſers thunder o'er the plains.
The fierce Pelaſgi next, in war renown'd,
March from Lariſſa's ever-fertile ground:
In equal arms their brother leaders ſhine,
Hippothous bold, and Pyleus the divine.
Next Acamas and Pyrous lead their hoſts
In dread array, from Thracia's wintry coaſts;
Round the bleak realms where Helleſpontus rores,
And Boreas beats the hoarſe-reſounding ſhores.
With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,
Sprung from Trœzenian Ceus, lov'd by Jove.
Pyrœchmes the Pæonian troops attend,
Skill'd in the fight their crooked bows to bend;
From Axius' ample bed he leads them on,
Axius, that laves the diſtant Amydon,

Axius, that ſwells with all his neighb'ring rills,
And wide around the floated region fills.
The Paphlagonians Pylæmenes rules,
Where rich Henetia breeds her ſavage mules.
Where Erythinus' riſing clifts are ſeen,
Thy groves of box, Cytorus! ever green;
And where Ægyalus and Cromna lie,
And lofty Seſamus invades the ſky;
And where Parthenius, roll'd thro' banks of flow'rs,
Reflects her bord'ring palaces and bow'rs.
Here march'd in arms the Halizonian band,
Whom Odius and Epiſtrophus command,
From thoſe far regions where the ſun refines
The rip'ning ſilver in Alybean mines,
There, mighty Chromis led the Myſian train,
And augur Ennomus, inſpir'd in vain,
For ſtern Achilles lopt his ſacred head,
Roll'd down Scamander with the vulgar dead.
Phorcys and brave Aſcanius here unite
Th' Aſcanian Phrygians, eager for the fight.
Of thoſe who round Mæonia's realms reſide,
Or whom the vales in ſhade of Tmolus hide,
Meſtles and Antiphus the charge partake;
Born on the banks of Gyges ſilent lake.
There, from the fields where mild Mæander flows,
High Mycale, and Latmos' ſhady brows,
And proud Miletus, came the Carian throngs,
With mingled clamours, and with barb'rous tongues.
Amphimachus and Nauſtes guide the train,
Nauſtes the bold, Amphimachus the vain,

Ver. 1032. *Axius, that ſwells with all his neighb'ring rills.*] According to the common reading, this verſe ſhould be tranſlated, *Axius that diffuſes his beautiful waters over the land.* But we are aſſured by Strabo, that Axius was a muddy river, and that the ancients underſtood it thus, *Axius that receives into it ſeveral beautiful rivers.*

Who

Who trick'd with gold, and glitt'ring on his car,
Rode like a woman to the field of war,
Fool that he was! by fierce Achilles ſlain,
The river ſwept him to the briny main:
There whelm'd with waves the gaudy warrior lies;
The valiant victor ſeiz'd the golden prize.
The forces laſt in fair array ſucceed,
Which blameleſs Glaucus and Sarpedon lead;
The warlike bands that diſtant Lycia yields,
Where gulphy Xanthus foams along the fields.

OBSERVATIONS on the CATALOGUE.

IF we look upon this piece with an eye to ancient learning, it may be obſerved, that however fabulous the other parts of Homer's poem may be, according to the nature of epic poetry; this account of the people, princes, and countries, is purely hiſtorical, founded on the real tranſactions of thoſe times, and by far the moſt valuable piece of hiſtory and geography left us concerning the ſtate of Greece, in that early period: Greece was then divided into ſeveral dynaſties, which our author has enumerated under their reſpective princes; and his diviſion was looked upon ſo exact, that we are told of many controverſies concerning the boundaries of Grecian cities, which have been decided upon the authority of this piece. Euſtathius has collected together the following inſtances. The city of Calydon was adjudged to the Ætolians, notwithſtanding the pretenſions of Æolia, becauſe Homer had ranked it among the towns belonging to the former. Seſtos was given to thoſe of Abydos, upon the plea that he had ſaid the Abydonians were poſſeſſors of Seſtos, Abydos, and Ariſbe. When the Mileſians and people of Priene diſputed their claim to Mycale, a verſe of Homer carried it in favour of the Myleſians. And the Athenians were put in poſſeſſion of Salamis by another which was cited by Solon, or (as ſome think) interpolated by him for that purpoſe. Nay in ſo high eſtimation has this catalogue been held, that (as Por-

phyry has written) there have been laws in ſome nations for the youth to learn it by heart, and particularly Cerdias (whom Cuperus de Apophth. Homer. takes to be Cercydas, a law-giver of the Megalopolitans) made it one to his countrymen.

But if we conſider the catalogue purely as poetical, it will not want its beauties in that light. Rapin, who was none of the moſt ſuperſtitious admirers of our author, reckons it among thoſe parts which had particularly charmed him. We may obſerve firſt, what an air of probability is ſpread over the whole poem by the particularizing of every nation and people concerned in this war. Secondly, what an entertaining ſcene he preſents to us, of ſo many countries drawn in their livelieſt and moſt natural colours, while we wander along with him amidſt a beautiful variety of towns, havens, foreſts, vineyards, groves, mountains, and rivers; and are perpetually amuſed with his obſervations on the different ſoils, products, ſituations, or proſpects. Thirdly, what a noble review he paſſes before us of ſo mighty an army, drawn out in order troop by troop; which, had the number only been told in the groſs, had never filled the reader with ſo great a notion of the importance of the action. Fourthly, the deſcription of the differing arms and manner of fighting of the ſoldiers, and the various attitudes he has given to the commanders: Of the leaders, the greateſt part are either the immediate ſons of Gods, or the deſcendants of Gods; and how great an idea muſt we have of a war, to the waging of which ſo many demi-gods and heroes are aſſembled? Fifthly, the ſeveral artful complements he paid by this means to his own country in general, and many of his contemporaries in particular, by a celebration of the genealogies, ancient feats, and dominions of the great men of his time. Sixthly, the agreeable mixture of narrations from paſſages of hiſtory or fables, with which he amuſes and relieves us at proper intervals. And laſtly, the admirable judgment wherewith he introduces this whole catalogue, juſt at a time when the poſture of affairs in the army rendered ſuch a review of abſolute neceſſity to the Greeks; and in a pauſe of action, while

while each was refreſhing himſelf to prepare for the enſuing battles.

Macrobius in his Saturnalia, lib. v. cap. 15. has given us a judicious piece of criticiſm, in the compariſon betwixt the catalogue of Homer and of Virgil, in which he juſtly allows the preference to our author, for the following reaſons. Homer (ſays he) has begun his deſcription from the moſt noted promontory of Greece, (he means that of Aulis, where was the narroweſt paſſage to Eubœa.) From thence with a regular progreſs, he deſcribes either the maritime or mediterranean towns, as their ſituations are contiguous: He never paſſes with ſudden leaps from place to place, omitting thoſe which lie between; but proceeding like a traveller in the way he has begun, conſtantly returns to the place from whence he digreſſed, till he finiſhes the whole circle he deſigned. Virgil, on the contrary, has obſerved no order in the regions deſcribed in his catalogue, l. x. but is perpetually breaking from the courſe of the country in a looſe and deſultory manner. You have Cluſium and Coſæ at the beginning, next Populonia and Ilva, then Piſæ, which lie at a vaſt diſtance in Etruria; and immediately after, Cerete, Pyrgi, and Graviſcæ, places adjacent to Rome: from hence he is ſnatched to Liguria, then to Mantua. The ſame negligence is obſervable in his enumeration of the aids that followed Turnus in l. vii. Macrobius next remarks, that all the perſons who are named by Homer in his catalogue, are afterwards introduced in his battles, and whenever any others are killed, he mentions only a multitude in general. Whereas Virgil (he continues) has ſpared himſelf the labour of that exactneſs; for not only ſeveral whom he mentions in the liſt, are never heard of in the war, but others make a figure in the war, of whom we had no notice in the liſt. For example, he ſpecifies a thouſand men under Maſſicus, who came from Cluſium, l. x. ver. 167. Turnus ſoon afterwards is in the ſhip which had carried king Oſinius from the ſame place, l. x. ver. 655. This Oſinius was never named before, nor is it probable a king ſhould ſerve under Maſſicus. Nor indeed does either Maſſicus or Oſinius ever make

their

their appearance in the battles.——He proceeds to instance several others, who though celebrated for heroes in the catalogue, have no farther notice taken of them throughout the poem. In the third place he animadverts upon the confusion of the same names in Virgil: as where Corinæus in the ninth book is killed by Asylas, ver. 571. and Corinæus in the twelfth kills Ebusus, ver. 298. Numa is slain by Nisus, l. ix. ver. 554. and Æneas is afterwards in pursuit of Numa, l. x. ver. 562. Æneas kills Camertes in the tenth book, ver. 562. and Juturna assumes his shape in the twelfth, ver. 224. He observes the same obscurity in his Patronimics. There is Palinarus Iasides, and Iapix Iasides, Hippocoon Hyrtacides, and Asylas Hyrtacides. On the contrary, the caution of Homer is remarkable, who having two of the name of Ajax, is constantly careful to distinguish them by Oileus or Telamonius, the lesser or the greater Ajax.

I know nothing to be alleged in defence of Virgil, in answer to this author, but the common excuse that his Æneis was left unfinished. And upon the whole, these are such trivial slips, as great wits may pass over, and little critics rejoice at.

But Macrobius has another remark, which one may accuse of evident partiality on the side of Homer. He blames Virgil for having varied the expression in his catalogue, to avoid the repetition of the same words, and prefers the bare and unadorned reiterations of Homer; who begins almost every article the same way, and ends perpetually, Μέλαιναι νῆες ἔποντο, etc. Perhaps the best reason to be given for this, had been the artless manner of the first times, when such repetitions were not thought ungraceful. This may appear from several of the like nature in the Scripture; as in the twenty-sixth chapter of Numbers, where the tribes of Israel are enumerated in the plains of Moab, and each division recounted in the same words. So in the seventh chapter of the Revelations: *Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand*, etc. But the words of Macrobius are, *Has copias fortasse putat aliquis divinæ illi simplicitati preferendas. Sed nescio quo modo Homerum repetitio illa unice decet, et est genio antiqui poetæ digna.*

digna. This is exactly in the ſpirit, and almoſt in the cant, of a true modern critic. The *Simplicitas*, the *Neſcio quo modo*, the *Genio antiqui poetæ digna*, are excellent general phraſes for thoſe who have no reaſons. *Simplicity* is our word of diſguiſe for a ſhameful unpoetical neglect of expreſſion: The term of the *Je ne ſçay quoy* is the very ſupport of all ignorant pretenders to delicacy; and to lift up our eyes, and talk of the *genius of an ancient*, is at once the cheapeſt way of ſhewing our own taſte, and the ſhorteſt way of criticizing the wit of others our contemporaries.

One may add to the foregoing compariſon of theſe two authors, ſome reaſons for the length of Homer's and the ſhortneſs of Virgil's catalogues. As, that Homer might have a deſign to ſettle the geography of his country, there being no deſcription of Greece before his days; which was not the caſe with Virgil. Homer's concern was to complement Greece at a time when it was divided into many diſtinct ſtates, each of which might expect a place in his catalogue: but when all Italy was ſwallowed up in the ſole dominion of Rome, Virgil had only Rome to celebrate. Homer had a numerous army, and was to deſcribe an important war with great and various events, whereas Virgil's ſphere was much more confined. The ſhips of the Greeks were computed at about one thouſand two hundred, thoſe of Æneas and his aids, but at two and forty; and as the time of the action of both poems is the ſame, we may ſuppoſe the bulk of their ſhips, and the number of men they contained, to be much alike. So that if the army of Homer amounts to about a hundred thouſand men, that of Virgil cannot be above four thouſand. If any one be farther curious to know upon what this computation is founded, he may ſee it in the following paſſage of Thucydides, lib. i. "Homer's fleet (ſays he) conſiſted of one thouſand two "hundred veſſels; thoſe of the Bœotians carried one "hundred and twenty men in each, and thoſe of Phy"loctetes fifty. By theſe I ſuppoſe Homer expreſt the "largeſt and the ſmalleſt ſize of ſhips, and therefore "mentions no other ſort. But he tells us of thoſe who "ſailed with Philoctetes, that they ſerved both as ma-

"riners

" riners and ſoldiers, in ſaying the rowers were all of " them archers. From hence the whole number will " be ſeen, if we eſtimate the ſhips at a medium be- " tween the greateſt and the leaſt." That is to ſay, at eighty-five men to each veſſel (which is the mean between fifty and a hundred and twenty) the total comes to a hundred and two thouſand men. Plutarch was therefore in a miſtake when he computed the men at a hundred and twenty thouſand, which proceeded from his ſuppoſing a hundred and twenty in every ſhip; the contrary to which appears from the above-mentioned ſhips of Philoctetes, as well as from thoſe of Achilles, which are ſaid to carry but fifty men a-piece, in the ſixteenth Iliad, ver. 207.

Beſides Virgil's imitation of this catalogue, there has ſcarce been any epic writer but has copied after it; which is at leaſt a proof how beautiful this part has been ever eſteemed by the fineſt geniuſes in all ages. The catalogues in the ancient poets are generally known, only I muſt take notice, that the Phocian and Bœotian towns in the fourth Thebaid of Statius are tranſlated from hence. Of the moderns, thoſe who moſt excel, owe their beauty to the imitation of ſome ſingle particular only of Homer. Thus the chief grace of Taſſo's catalogue conſiſts in the deſcription of the heroes, without any thing remarkable on the ſide of the countries: Of the pieces of ſtory he has interwoven, that of Tancred's amour to Clorinda is ill-placed, and evidently too long for the reſt. Spenſer's enumeration of the Britiſh and Iriſh rivers in the eleventh canto of his fourth book, is one of the nobleſt in the world; if we conſider his ſubject was more confined, and can excuſe his not obſerving the order or courſe of the country; but his variety of deſcription, and fruitfulneſs of imagination, are no where more admirable than in that part. Milton's liſt of the fallen angels in his firſt book is an exact imitation of Homer; as far as regards the digreſſions of hiſtory, and antiquities, and his manner of inſerting them: In all elſe I believe it muſt be allowed inferior. And indeed what Macrobius has ſaid to caſt Virgil below Homer, will fall much more ſtrongly upon all the reſt.

I had

I had ſome cauſe to fear that this catalogue, which contributed ſo much to the ſucceſs of the author, ſhould ruin that of the tranſlator. A mere heap of proper names, though but for a few lines together, could afford little entertainment to an Engliſh reader, who probably could not be apprized either of the neceſſity or beauty of this part of the poem. There were but two things to be done to give it a chance to pleaſe him; to render the verſification very flowing and muſical, and to make the whole appear as much a landſcape or piece of painting as poſſible. For both of theſe I had the example of Homer in general: and Virgil, who found the neceſſity in another age to give more into deſcription, ſeemed to authoriſe the latter in particular. Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, in his diſcourſe of the ſtructure and diſpoſition of words, profeſſes to admire nothing more than that harmonious exactneſs with which Homer has placed theſe words, and ſoftened the ſyllables into each other, ſo as to derive muſic from a croud of names, which have in themſelves no beauty or dignity. I would flatter myſelf that I have practiſed this not unſucceſsfully in our language, which is more ſuſceptible of all the variety and power of numbers, than any of the modern, and ſecond to none but the Greek and Roman. For the latter point, I have ventured to open the proſpect a little, by the addition of a few epithets or ſhort hints of deſcription to ſome of the places mentioned; though ſeldom exceeding the compaſs of half a verſe (the ſpace to which my author himſelf generally confines theſe pictures in miniature.) But this has never been done without the beſt authorities from the ancients, which may be ſeen under the reſpective names in the geographical table following.

The table itſelf I thought but neceſſary to annex to the map, as my warrant for the ſituations aſſigned in it to ſeveral of the towns. For in whatever maps I have ſeen to this purpoſe, many of the places are omitted, or elſe ſet down at random. Sophianus and Gerbelius have laboured to ſettle the geography of old Greece, many of whoſe miſtakes were rectified by Laurenbergius. Theſe however deſerved a greater com-

commendation than thoſe who ſucceeded them; and particularly Sanſon's map prefixed to Du Pin's Bibliotheque Hiſtorique, is miſerably defective both in omiſſions and falſe placings; which I am obliged to mention, as it pretends to be deſigned expreſsly for this catalogue of Homer. I am perſuaded the greater part of my readers will have no curioſity this way, however they may allow me the endeavour of gratifying thoſe few who have: The reſt are at liberty to paſs the two or three following leaves unread.

A Gre-

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PHRYGIA cum Oris Maritimis

A GEOGRAPHICAL TABLE *of the towns*, etc. *in* HOMER's *Catalogue of Greece, with the authorities for their ſituation, as placed in this map.*

BOEOTIA, under five captains, Peneleus, etc. containing,

AULIS, a haven on the Euboean ſea, oppoſite to Chalcis, where the paſſage to Euboea is narroweſt. Strabo, lib. ix.

Eteon, Homer deſcribes it a hilly country, and Statius after him——*denſamque jugis Eteonem iniquis.* Theb. vii.

Hyrie, a town and lake of the ſame name belonging to the territory of Tanagra or Graea. Strab. l. ix.

Schoenus, it lay in the road between Thebes and Anthedon, 50 ſtadia from Thebes. Strab. ibid.

Scholos, a town under mount Cytheron. Ibid.

Theſpia, near Haliartus under mount Helicon. Pauſ. Boeot. near the Corinthian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Graea, the ſame with Tanagra, 30 ſtadia from Aulis, on the Euboean ſea; by this place the river Aſopus falls into that ſea. Ib.

Mycaleſſus, between Thebes and Chalcis. Pauſ. Boeot. near Tenegra or Graea. Strab. l. ix. Famous for its pine-trees.——*Pinegeris Mycaleſſus in agris.* Statius, l. vii.

Harma, cloſe by Mycaleſſus. Strab. l. ix. This town as well as the former lay near the road from Thebes to Chalcis. Pauſ. Boeot. It was here that Amphiaraus was ſwallowed by the earth in his chariot, from whence it received its name. Strab. ib.

Ileſion, it was ſituate in the fens near Heleon and Hyle, not far from Tanagra. Theſe three places took their names from being ſo ſeated (Ἕλος, Palus.) Strab. l. ix.

Erythrae, in the confines of Attica near Platea. Thucyd. l. iii. —— *dites pecorum comitantur Erythrae.* Stat. Theb. vii.

Peteon, in the way from Thebes to Anthedon. Stra. l. ix.

Ocalea, in the mid-way betwixt Haliartus and Alalcomenes. Ibid.

Medeon, near Onchestus Ibid.

Copæ, a town on the lake Copais, by the river Cephissus, next Orchomenus. Ibid.

Eutresis, a small town of the Thespians near Thisbe. Ibid.

Thisbe, under mount Helicon. Paus. Bœot.

Coronea, seated on the Cephissus, where it falls into the lake Copais. Stra. l. ix.

Haliartus, on the same lake, Strab. ibid. Bordering on Coronea and Platæa. Paus. Bœot.

Platæa, between Citheron and Thebes, divided from the latter by the river Asopus. Strab. l. ix. *Viridesque Platæas.* Stat. Th. vii.

Glissa, in the territory of Thebes, abounding with vines. *Baccho Glysanta colentes.* Stat.

Thebe, situate between the rivers Ismenus and Asophus. Strab. l. ix.

Onchestus, on the lake Copais. The grove consecrated to Neptune in this place, and celebrated by Homer, together with a temple and statue of that God, were shewn in the time of Pausanias. Vide Bœot.

Arne, seated on the same lake, famous for vines. Strab. Hom.

Midea, on the same lake Ibid.

Nissa, or Nysa, *(apud Statium)* or according to Strabo, l. ix. Isa; near Anthedon.

Anthedon, a city on the sea-side, opposite to Eubœa, the utmost on the shore towards Locris. Stra. l. ix. *Teque ultima tractu Anthedon.* Statius, l. vii.

Aspledon, 20 stadia from Orchomenus, Strab. l. ix.

Orchomenus, and the plains about it, being the most spacious of all in Bœotia. (Plutarch in vit. Syllæ, circa medium.)

Homer distinguishes these two last from the rest of Bœotia. They were commanded by Ascalaphus and Ialmen.

PHOCIS, under Schedius and Epistrophus, containing,

Cyparissus, the same with Anticyrrha according to Pausanias, on the bay of Corinth.

Pytho, adjoining to Parnassus: some think it the same with Delphi. Pausan. Phocic.

Crissa, a sea-town on the bay of Corinth near Cyrrha. Strab. l. ix.

Daulis

Daulis, upon the Cephiſus, at the foot of Parnaſſus. Ibid.

Panopea, upon the ſame river, adjoining to Orchomenia, juſt by Hyampolis or Anemoria. Ibid.

Hyampolis, Anemoria, both the ſame according to Strabo. Ibid. Confining upon Locris. Paus. Phoc.

Lilæa, at the head of the river Cephiſſus, juſt on the edge of Phocis. Ib —*propellentemque Lilæam Cephiſſi glacialé caput.* Stat. l. vii.

LOCRIS, under Ajax Oileus, containing,

Cynus, a maritime town towards Eubœa. Strab. l. ix.

Opus, a Locrian city, 5 ſtadia from the ſea, adjacent to Panopea in Phocis. Ib.

Calliarus.

Beſſa, ſo called from being covered with ſhrubs. Strab. l. ix.

Scarphe, ſeated between Thronium and Thermopylæ, 10 ſtadia from the ſea. Ibid.

Augiæ.

Tarphe.

Thronius, on the Melian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Boagrius, a river that paſſes by Thronius, and runs into the bay of Oeta, between Cynus and Scarphe. Ibid

All theſe oppoſite to the iſle of Eubœa.

EUBOEA, under Elphenor, containing,

Chalcis, the city neareſt to the continent of Greece; juſt oppoſite to Aulis in Bœotia. Strab. l. x.

Eretria, between Chalcis and Gereſtus. Ibid.

Hiſtiœa, a town with vineyards, over-againſt Theſſaly. Herod. l. vii.

Cerinthus, on the ſea-ſhore. Hom. Near the river Budorus. Strab. l. i.

Dios, ſeated high. Hom. near Hiſtiœa. Strab. ib.

Caryſtos, a city at the foot of the mountain Ocha. Strab. ibid. Between Eretria and Gereſtus. Ptolem. l. iii.

Styra, a town near Caryſtos. Strab. ibid.

ATTICA, under Menestheus.

The Isle of SALAMIS, under Ajax Telamon

PELOPONNESUS, the east part divided into Argia and Mycenæ, under Agamemnon, contains,

Argos, 40 stadia from Lerna. Pauſ. Corin.

Isthmus, between Argos and Epidaurus. Ibid.

Three cities, lying in this order on the bay of Hermione. Strab. l. viii. Pauſ. Corinth. Trœzene was ſeated high, and Aſine a rocky coaſt. — Altaque Trœzene. Ov. Faſt. ii. — *Quos Aſine cautes.* Luc. l. viii.

Hermion,
Trœzene,

Mycenæ was on the ſea- for Strabo tells us the ble of Mycenæ made it ation for their ſhips, viii.

Epidaurus, a town and ſ iſland adjoining, in inner part of the Saro- bay. Strab. l. viii. It fruitful in vines in ner's time.

The Iſle of Ægina, over againſt Epidaurus.

Maleta belongs to the Argolic there according to Strabo, who obſerves that Homer names it not in the exact order, placing it with Ægina. Strab. l. viii.

Mycenæ, between Cleone and Argos. Str. Pauſan.

Corinth, near the Ithmus.

Cleone, between Argos and Corinth. Pauſ. Corinth.

Ornia, on the borders of Sicyonia. Ibid.

Arethyria, the ſame with Phliaſia, at the ſource of the Achaian Aſopus. Strab. l. viii.

Sicyon, (anciently the kingdom of Adraſtus) betwixt Corinth and Achaia. Pauſ. Corinth.

Hypereſia, the ſame with Ægira, ſays Pauſ. Achaic. Seated betwixt Pellene and Helice. Strab. l viii. Oppoſite to Parnaſſus. Polyb. l. iv.

Gonoeſſa

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] under [illegible]

Sparta the capital [illegible] on the river [illegible]

Pharis, on the [illegible] Messenia. Strabo. [illegible]

Messa. Strabo thinks this a contraction of Messena, and Statius in his imitation of this catalogue, lib. iv. calls it so.

Brysia, under mount Taygetus. Paus. Lacon.

Augiæ, the same with Ægiæ in the opinion of [illegible]

[illegible] Strabo. [illegible]

[illegible] Sparta [illegible] Taygetus. [illegible]

Helos, on the [illegible] Strab. [illegible]

Laas.

Oetylos, near the promontory of Tænarus. Paus. Lac.

MESSENIA, under Nestor, containing

Pylos, the city of Nestor on the sea-shore.

Arene, seated near the river Minyeius. Hom. Il. 11. Strab. l. viii.

Thryon, on the river Alpheus, the same which Homer elsewhere calls Thryoëssa. Strab. ibid.

Æpy, the ancient geographers differ about the situation of this town, but agree to place it near the sea. Vide Strab. l. viii.

Summis impositum montibus Æpy. Stat. l. iv.

Cyparissie, on the borders of Messenia, and [illegible]

on the bay called from it Cyparisſæus. Pauſ. Meſſen.

Amphigenia, —*Fertilis Amphigenia.* Stat. Th. iv. near the former. So alſo, Pteleon, which was built by a colony from Pteleon in Theſſaly. Strab. l. viii.

Helos, near the river Alpheus. Ibid.

Dorion, a field or mountain near the ſea. Ibid.

ARCADIA, under Agapenor, containing,

The mountain Cellene, the higheſt of Peloponneſus, on the borders of Achaia and Arcadia, near Pheneus. Pauſ. Arcad. Under this ſtood the tomb of Æpytus. That monument (the ſame author tells us) was remaining in his time, it was only a heap of earth incloſed with a wall of rough ſtone.

Pheneus, confining on Pellene and Stymphelus. Ibid.

Orchomenus, confining on Pheneus and Mantinæa. Ibid.

Ripe,
Stratie,
Eniſpe,
} Theſe three, Strab. tells us, are not to be found, nor their ſituation aſſigned. Lib. 8. *prope fin.* Eniſpe ſtood high, as appears from Hom. and Stat. l. iv. *Ventoſaque donat Eniſpe.*

Tegea, between Argos and Sparta. Polyb. l. iv.

Mantinæa, bordering upon Tegea, Argia, and Orchomenus. Pauſ. Arcad.

Stymphelus, confining on Phlyaſia or Arethyria. Strab. l. viii.

Parrhaſia, adjoining to Laconia. Thucyd. l. v. —*Parrhaſiæque nives.* Ovid. Faſt. ii.

ELIS, under four leaders, Amphimachus, etc. containing,

The city Elis, 120 ſtadia from the ſea. Pauſ. Eliacis ii.

Buprafium near Elis, Strab. l. viii.

The places bounded by the fields of Hyrmine, in the territory of Elis, between mount Cyllene and the ſea.

Myrſinus,

Myrſinus, on the ſea-ſide, 70 ſtadia from Elis. Strab. l. viii.

The Olenian Rocks, which ſtood near the city Olenos, at the mouth of the river Pierus. Paul. Achaic.

And Alyſium, the name of a town or river, in the way from Elis to Piſa. Strab. l. viii.

The ISLES over-againſt the continent of Elis, Achaia, or Acarnania.

Echinades and Dulichium, under Meges.

The Cephalenians under Ulyſſes, being thoſe from Samos (the ſame with Cephalenia) from Zacynthus, Grocylia, Ægilipa, Neritus, and Ithaca. This laſt is generally ſuppoſed to be the largeſt of theſe iſlands on the eaſt ſide of Cephalenia, and next to it; but that is, according to Wheeler, 20 Italian miles in circumference, whereas Strabo gives Ithaca but 80 ſtadia about. It was rather one of the leſſer iſlands towards the mouth of the Achelous.

Homer adds to theſe places under the dominion of Ulyſſes, Epirus and the oppoſite continent, by which (as M. Dacier obſerves) cannot be meant Epirus properly ſo called, which was never ſubject to Ulyſſes, but only the ſea-coaſt of Acarnania, oppoſite to the iſlands.

The continent of ACARNANIA and AETOLIA, under Thoas.

Pleuron, ſeated between Chalcis and Calydon, by the ſea-ſhore, upon the river Evenus, weſt of Chalcis. Strab. l. x.

Olenos, lying above Calydon, with the Evenus on the eaſt of it. Ibid.

Pylene, the ſame with Proſchion, not far from Pleuron, but more in the land. Strabo, lib. x.

Chalcis, a ſea-town. Hom. Situate on the eaſt ſide of the Evenus. Strab. Ibid. There was another Chalcis at the head of the Evenus, called by Strabo Hypo-Chalcis.

Calydon, on the Evenus alſo. Ibid.

The Iſle of CRETE, under Idomeneus, containing,

Gnoſſus, ſeated in the plain between Lyctus and Gortyna, 120 ſtadia from Lyctus. Strab. l. x.

Gortyna, 90 ſtad. from the African ſea. Ibid.

Lyctus, 80 ſtadia from the ſame ſea. Ibid.

Miletus.

Phæſtus, 60 ſtadia from Gortyna, 20 from the ſea; under Gortyna. Strabo, ibid. It lay on the river Jardan, as appears by Homer's deſcription of it in the third book of the Odyſſey.

Lycaſtus.

Rhytium, under Gortyna. Strab.

The Iſle of RHODES, under Tlepolemus, containing,

Lindus, on the right hand to thoſe who ſail from the city of Rhodes, ſouthward. Strab. l. xiv.

Jalyſſus, between Camirus and Rhodes. Ibid.

Camirus.

The iſlands; Syma, (under Nireus,) Niſyrus, Carpathus, Caſus, Cos, Calydnæ, under Antiphus and Phidippus.

The continent of THESSALY towards the Ægean ſea, under Achilles.

Argos Pelaſgicum, (the ſame which was ſince called Phthiotis,) Strab. l. ix. ſays that ſome thought this the name of a town, others that Homer meant by it this part of Theſſaly in general, (which laſt ſeems moſt probable.) Steph. Byzant. obſerves, there was a city Argos in Theſſaly, as well as in Peloponneſus; the former was called Pelaſgic in contradiſtinction to the Achaian: for though the Pelaſgi poſſeſt ſeveral parts of Epirus, Crete, Peloponneſus, etc. yet they retained their principal ſeat in Theſſaly. Steph. Byz. in v. Panel.

Alos, Alope, Both on the ſhore of Theſſaly towards Locris. Str. l. ix. Alos lies in the paſſage of mount Othrys. *ib.*

Trechine, under the mountain Oeta. Euſtath. in Il. ii.

Phthia,

Phthia, Hellas, { Some ſuppoſed theſe two to be names of the ſame place, as Strabo ſays; tho' it is plain Homer diſtinguiſhes 'em. Whether they were cities or regions, Strabo is not determined. lib. ix.

The Hellenes. This denomination, afterwards common to all the Greeks, is here to be underſtood only of thoſe who inhabited Phthiotis. It was not until long after Homer's time, that the people of other cities of Greece deſiring aſſiſtance from theſe, began to have the ſame name from their communication with them, as Thucydides remarks in the beginning of his firſt book.

The following under Proteſilaus.

Phylace, on the coaſt of Phthiotis, toward the Melian bay. Strab. l. ix.

Pyrrhaſus, beyond the mountain Othrys, had the grove of Ceres within two ſtadia of it. Ibid.

Itona, 60 ſtad. from Alos; it lay higher in the land than Pyrrhaſus, above mount Othry's. Ibid.

Antron, on the ſea ſide. Hom. In the paſſage to Eubœa. Ibid.

Pteleon, the ſituation of this town in Strabo ſeems to be between Antron and Pyrrhaſus: but Pliny deſcribes it with great exactneſs to lie on the ſhore towards Bœotia, on the confines of Phthiotis, upon the river Sperchius; according to which particulars, it muſt have been ſeated as I have placed it. Livy alſo ſeats it on the Sperchius.

All thoſe towns which were under Proteſilaus, (ſays Strabo, lib. ix) being the five laſt mentioned, lay on the eaſtern ſide of the mountain Othrys.

Theſe under Eumelus.

Pheræ, in the fartheſt part of Magneſia, confining on mount Pelion. Strab. lib. ix. Near the lake of Bæbe. Ptol. And plentifully watered with the fountains of Hyperia. Strabo.

Glaphyræ.

Iolcos, a ſea-town on the Pegaſæan bay. Livy, lib. iv. and Strabo.

Under

Under Philoctetes.

Methone, a city of Macedonia, 40 ſtadia from Pydna in Pieria. Strab.

Theumacia, Mœlibea, in Phthiotis near Pharſalus, according to the ſame author. Ib.

Olyzon. It ſeems that this place lay near Bæbe, Iolcos, and Ormenium, from Strab. l. ix.; where he ſays, Demetrius cauſed the inhabitants of theſe towns to remove to Demetrias, on the ſame coaſt.

The Upper THESSALY.

The following under Podalirius and Machaon.

Trice, or Triece, not far from the mountain Pindus, on the left hand of the Peneus, as it runs from Pindus. Strab. lib. ix.

Ithome, near Trica. Ibid.

Oechalia, the ſituation not certain, ſomewhere near the forementioned towns. Strab. Ibid.

Under Eurypylus.

Ormenium, under Pelion, on the Pegaſæan bay, near Bæbe. Ibid.

Aſterium, hard by Pheræ and Titanus. Ibid.

Under Polyphætes.

Argiſſa, lying upon the river Peneus. Strab. l. ix.

Gyrtone, a city of Perrhæbia, at the foot of Olympus. Ibid.

Orthe, near Peneus and Tempe. Ibid.

Elops, Oloöſſon, both lying under Olympus, near the river Titareſius. Ib.

Under Guneus and Protheus.

Cyphus, ſeated in the mountainous country, towards Olympus. Ibid.

Dodona, among the mountains,

mountains, towards Olympus. Ibid.

Titareſius, a river riſing in the mountain Titarus, near Olympus, and running into Peneus. Ibid. It is alſo called Eurotas.

The river Peneus riſes from mount Pindus, and flows through Tempe into the ſea. Strab. l. vii. and ix.

Pelion, near Oſſa, in Magneſia. Herod. l. vii.

A Table of TROY, *and the auxiliar* COUNTRIES.

THE kingdom of Priam divided into eight dynaſties.

1. Troas, under Hector, whoſe capital was Ilion.

2. Dardania, under Æneas, the capital Dardanus.

3. Zeleia, at the foot of Ida, by the Æſæpus, under Pandarus.

4. Adreſtia, Apæſus, Pityea, mount Teree, under Adraſtus and Amphius.

5. Seſtos, Abydos, Ariſbe, on the river Selle, Percote, and Practius, under Aſius.

Theſe places lay between Troy and the Propontis.

The other three dynaſties were under Mynes, Eetion, and Alteus; the capital of the firſt was Lyrneſſus, of the ſecond Thebe of Cilicia, of the third Pedaſus in Lelegia. Homer does not mention theſe in the catalogue, having been before deſtroyed and depopulated by the Greeks.

The Auxiliar Nations.

The Pelaſgi, under Hippothous and Pyleus, whoſe capital was Lariſſa, near the place where Cuma was afterwards built. Strabo, l. xiii.

The Thracians, by the ſide of the Helleſpont, oppoſite to Troy, under Acamas and Pyrous, and thoſe of Siconia, under Euphemus.

The Pœonians from Macedonia and the river

ver Axius, under Pyrechmes.

The Paphlagonians, under Pylæmeneus. The Halizonians, under Odius and Epistrophus. The Mysians, under Cromis and Ennomus. The Phrygians of Ascania, under Phorcys and Ascanius.

The Mæonians, under Mestles and Antiphus, who inhabited under the mountain Tmolus.

The Carians, under Naustes and Amphimachus, from Miletus, the farthermost city of Caria towards the south. Herodot. l. i.

Mycale, a mountain and promontory opposite to Samos. Ibid.

Phthiron, the same mountain as Latmos, according to Hecatæus.

The Lycians, under Sarpedon and Glaucus, from the banks of the river Xanthus, which runs into the sea betwixt Rhodes and Cyprus. Homer mentions it to distinguish this Lycia from that which lies on the Propontis.

THE

THE ILIAD.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

The duel of Menelaus and Paris.

THE armies being ready to engage, a ſingle combat is agreed upon between Menelaus and Paris (by the intervention of Hector) for the determination of the war, Iris is ſent to call Helena to behold the fight. She leads her to the walls of Troy, where Priam ſat with his counſellors obſerving the Grecian leaders on the plain below, to whom Helen gives an account of the chief of them. The kings on either part take the ſolemn oath for the conditions of the combat. The duel enſues, wherein Paris being overcome, is ſnatched away in a cloud by Venus, and tranſported to his appartment. She then calls Helen from the walls, and brings the lovers together. Agamemnon, on the part of the Grecians, demands the reſtoration of Helen, and the performance of the articles.

The three and twentieth day ſtill continues throughout this book. The ſcene *is ſometimes in the* fields *before Troy, and ſometimes in Troy itſelf.*

THUS by their leader's care each martial band
Moves into ranks, and ſtretches o'er the land.
With

Of all the books of the Iliad, there is ſcarce any more pleaſing than the third. It may be divided into five parts, each of which has a beauty different from the other. The firſt contains what paſſed before the two armies, and the propoſal of the com-

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With ſhouts the Trojans ruſhing from afar,
Proclaim their motions, and provoke the war:
So when inclement winters vex the plain
With piercing froſts, or thick deſcending rain,
To warmer ſeas the cranes embody'd fly,
With noiſe, and order, thro' the mid-way ſky;

To

bat between Paris and Menelaus: The attention and ſuſpenſe of theſe mighty hoſts, which were juſt upon the point of joining battle, and the lofty manner of offering and accepting this important and unexpected challenge, have ſomething in them wonderfully pompous, and of an amuſing ſolemnity. The ſecond part, which deſcribes the behaviour of Helena in this juncture, her conference with the old king and his counſellors, with the review of the heroes from the battlements, is an epiſode entirely of another ſort, which excels in the natural and pathetic. The third conſiſts of the ceremonies of the oath on both ſides, and the preliminaries to the combat; with the beautiful retreat of Priam, who in the tenderneſs of a parent withdraws from the fight of the duel: Theſe particulars detain the reader in expectation, and heighten his impatience for the fight itſelf. The fourth is the deſcription of the duel, an exact piece of painting, where we ſee every attitude, motion, and action of the combatants particularly and diſtinctly, and which concludes with a ſurpriſing propriety, in the reſcue of Paris by Venus. The machine of that goddeſs, which makes the fifth part, and whoſe end is to reconcile Paris and Helena, is admirable in every circumſtance; The remonſtrance ſhe holds with the goddeſs, the reluctance with which ſhe obeys her, the reproaches ſhe caſts upon Paris, and the flattery and courtſhip with which he ſo ſoon wins her over to him. Helen (the main cauſe of this war) was not to be made an odious character: ſhe is drawn by this great maſter with the fineſt ſtrokes, as a frail, but not an abandoned creature. She has perpetual ſtruggles of virtue on the one ſide, and ſoftneſſes which overcome them on the other.

Ver. 3. *With ſhouts the Trojans,*] The book begins with a fine oppoſition of the noiſe of the Trojan army to the ſilence of the Grecians. It was but natural to imagine this, ſince the former was compoſed of many different nations, of various languages and ſtrangers to each other; the latter were more united in their neighbourhood, and under leaders of the ſame country.

Ver. 7. *The cranes embody'd fly.*] If wit has been truly deſcribed

To pigmy nations wounds and death they bring,
And all the war deſcends upon the wing.
But ſilent, breathing rage, reſolv'd and ſkill'd
By mutual aids to fix a doubtful field;
Swift march the Greeks: the rapid duſt around
Dark'ning ariſes from the labour'd ground.
Thus from his flaggy wings when Notus ſheds
A night of vapours round the mountain-heads,
Swift-gliding miſts the duſky fields invade,
To thieves more grateful than the midnight ſhade:
While ſcarce the ſwains their feeding flocks ſurvey,
Loſt and confus'd amidſt the thicken'd day:
So wrapt in gath'ring duſt, the Grecian train
A moving cloud, ſwept on, and hid the plain.
Now front to front the hoſtile armies ſtand,
Eager of fight, and only wait command;
When, to the van, before the ſons of fame
Whom Troy ſent forth, the beauteous Paris came:
In

ed to be a ſimilitude in ideas, and is more excellent as that ſimilitude is more ſurpriſing; there cannot be a truer kind of wit than what is ſhewn in apt compariſons, eſpecially when compoſed of ſuch ſubjects as having the leaſt relation to each other in general, have yet ſome particular that agrees exactly. Of this nature is the ſimile of the cranes to the Trojan army, where the fancy of Homer flew to the remoteſt part of the world for an image which no reader could have expected. But it is no leſs exact than ſurpriſing. The likeneſs conſiſts in two points, the noiſe and the order; the latter is ſo obſervable, as to have given ſome of the ancients occaſion to imagine, the embatteling of an army was firſt learned from the cleſe manner of flight of theſe birds.

Ver. 26. *The beauteous Paris came: In form a God.*] The pictures here given of Paris's air and dreſs, is exactly correſpondent to his character; you ſee him endeavouring to mix the fine gentleman with the warrior; and this idea of him Homer takes care to keep up, by deſcribing him not without the ſame regard, when he is arming to encounter Menelaus afterwards in a cloſe fight, as he ſhews here, where he is but preluding and flouriſhing in the gaiety

In form a God! the panther's ſpeckled hyde
Flow'd o'er his armour with an eaſy pride,
His bended bow acroſs his ſhoulders flung
His ſword beſide him negligently hung,
Two pointed ſpears he ſhook with gallant grace,
And dar'd the braveſt of the Grecian race.
As thus with glorious air and proud diſdain,
He boldly ſtalk'd, the foremoſt on the plain,
Him Menelaus, lov'd of Mars, eſpies,
With heart elated, and with joyful eyes:
So joys a lion, if the branching deer,
Or mountain goat, his bulky prize, appear;

of his heart. And when he tells us, in that place, that he was in danger of being ſtrangled by the ſtrap of his helmet, he takes notice that it was *embroidered*.

Ver. 37. *So joys a lion, if the branching deer, Or mountain goat.*] The old ſcholiaſts refining on this ſimile, will have it, that Paris is compared to a goat on account of his incontinence, and to a ſtag for his cowardice: To this laſt they make an addition which is very ludicrous, that he is alſo likened to a deer for his ſkill in muſic, and cite Ariſtotle to prove that animal delights in harmony, which opinion is alluded to by Mr. Waller, in theſe lines:

Here love takes ſtand, and while ſhe charms the ear,
Empties his quiver on the liſt'ning deer.

But upon the whole, it is whimſical to imagine this compariſon conſiſts in any thing more, than the joy which Menelaus conceived at the ſight of his rival, in the hopes of deſtroying him. It is equally an injuſtice to Paris, to abuſe him for underſtanding muſic, and to repreſent his retreat as purely the effect of fear, which proceeded from his ſenſe of guilt with reſpect to the particular perſon of Menelaus. He appeared at the head of the army to challenge the boldeſt of the enemy: Nor is his character elſwhere in the Iliad by any means that of a coward. Hector, at the end of the ſixth book, confeſſes, that no man could juſtly reproach him as ſuch. Nor is he repreſented ſo by Ovid (who copied Homer very cloſely) in the end of his epiſtle to Helen. The moral of Homer is much finer: A brave mind, however blinded with paſſion, is ſenſible of remorſe as ſoon as the injured object preſents itſelf, and Paris never behaves himſelf ill in war, but when his ſpirits are depreſſed by the conſciouſneſs of an injuſtice.

Eager

Eager he ſeizes and devours the ſlain,
Preſt by bold youths, and baying dogs in vain.
Thus fond of vengeance, with a furious bound,
In clanging arms he leaps upon the ground
From his high chariot: Him, approaching near,
The beauteous champion views with marks of fear.
Smit with a conſcious ſenſe, retires behind,
And ſhuns the fate he well deſerv'd to find.
As when ſome ſhepherd from the ruſtling trees
Shot forth to view, a ſcaly ſerpent ſees;
Trembling and pale, he ſtarts with wild affright,
And all confus'd precipitates his flight.
So from the king the ſhining warrior flies,
And plunge'd amid the thickeſt Trojans lies.
As godlike Hector ſees the prince retreat,
He thus upbraids him with a gen'rous heat.
Unhappy

Ver. 53. *As godlike Hector,*] This is the firſt place of the poem where Hector makes a figure; and here it ſeems proper to give an idea of his character, ſince if he is not the chief hero of the Iliad, he is at leaſt the moſt amiable. There are ſeveral reaſons which render Hector a favourite character with every reader, ſome of which ſhall here be offered. The chief moral of Homer was to expoſe the ill effects of diſcord; the Greeks were to be ſhewn diſunited, and to render that diſunion the more probable, he has deſignedly given them mixt characters. The Trojans, on the other hand, were to be repreſented making all advantages of the others diſagreement, which they could not do without a ſtrict union among themſelves. Hector therefore, who commanded them, muſt be endued with all ſuch qualifications as tended to the preſervation of it; as Achilles with ſuch as promoted the contrary. The one ſtands in contraſt to the other, an accompliſh'd character of valour unruffled by rage and anger, and uniting his people by his prudence and example. Hector has alſo a foil to ſet him off in his own family; we are perpetually oppoſing in our minds the incontinence of Paris, who expoſes his country, to the temperance of Hector, who protects it. And indeed it is this love of his country, which appears his principal paſſion, and the motive of all his actions. He has no other blemiſh than that he fights in an unjuſt cauſe,

Unhappy Paris! but to women brave!
So fairly form'd, and only to deceive!
Oh hadſt thou dy'd when firſt thou ſaw'ſt the light.
Or dy'd at leaſt before thy nuptial rite!
A better fate than vainly thus to boaſt,
And fly, the ſcandal of thy Trojan hoſt.
Gods! how the ſcornful Greeks exult to ſee
Their fears of danger undeceiv'd in thee!
Thy figure promis'd with a martial air,
But ill thy ſoul ſupplies a form ſo fair.
In former days, in all thy gallant pride,
When thy tall ſhips triumphant ſtem'd the tide,
When Greece beheld thy painted canvas flow,
And clouds ſtood wond'ring at the paſſing ſhow;
Say, was it thus, with ſuch a baffled mien,
You met th' approaches of the Spartan queen,

which Homer has yet been careful to tell us he would not do, if his opinions were followed. But ſince he cannot prevail, the affection he bears to his parents and kindred, and his deſire of defending them, incites him to do his utmoſt for their ſafety. We may add, that Homer having ſo many Greeks to celebrate, makes them ſhine in their turns, and ſingly in their ſeveral books, one ſucceeding in the abſence of another; whereas Hector appears in every battle the life and ſoul of his party, and the conſtant bulwark againſt every enemy: he ſtands againſt Agamemnon's magnanimity, Diomed's bravery, Ajax's ſtrength, and Achilles's fury. There is beſides an accidental cauſe for our liking him, from reading the writers of the Auguſtan age (eſpecially Virgil) whoſe favourite he grew more particularly from the time when the Cæſars fancied to derive their pedigree from Troy.

Ver. 55. *Unhappy Paris, &c.*] It may be obſerved in honour of Homer's judgment, that the words which Hector is made to ſpeak here, very ſtrongly mark his character. They contain a warm reproach of cowardice, and ſhew him to be touched with ſo high a ſenſe of glory, as to think life inſupportable without it. His calling to mind the gallant figure which Paris had made in his amours to Helen, and oppoſing it to the image of his flight from her huſband, is a ſarcaſm of the utmoſt bitterneſs and vivacity.

Thus

Thus from her realm convey'd the beauteous prize,
And * both her warlike lords outſhin'd in Helen's eyes?
This deed thy foes delight, thy own diſgrace,
Thy father's grief, and ruin of thy race;
This deed recalls thee to the proffer'd fight;
Or haſt thou injur'd whom thou dar'ſt not right?
Soon to thy coſt the field would make thee know,
Thou keep'ſt the conſort of a braver foe.
Thy graceful form inſtilling ſoft deſire,
Thy curling treſſes, and thy ſilver lyre,
Beauty and youth, in vain to theſe you truſt,
When youth and beauty ſhall be laid in duſt:
Troy yet may wake, and one avenging blow
Cruſh the dire author of his country's woe.
His ſilence here, with bluſhes, Paris breaks;
'Tis juſt, my brother, what your anger ſpeaks:

But

* Theſeus and Menelaus.

Ver. 80. *Thy curling treſſes, and thy ſilver lyre.*] It is ingeniouſly remarked by Dacier, that Homer, who celebrates the Greeks for their long hair, and Achilles for his ſkill on the harp, makes Hector in this place object them both to Paris. The Greeks nouriſhed their hair to appear more dreadful to the enemy, and Paris to pleaſe the eyes of women. Achilles ſung to his harp the acts of heroes, and Paris the amours of lovers. The ſame reaſon which makes Hector here diſpleaſed at them, made Alexander afterwards refuſe to ſee this lyre of Paris, when offered to be ſhewn to him, as Plutarch relates the ſtory in his oration of the fortune of Alexander.

Ver. 86. *'Tis juſt, my brother.*] This ſpeech is a farther opening of the true character of Paris. He is a maſter of civility, no leſs well-bred to his own ſex than courtly to the other. The reproof of Hector was of a ſevere nature, yet he receives it as from a brother and a friend, with candour and modeſty. This anſwer is remarkable for its fine addreſs; he gives the hero a decent and agreeable reproof for having too raſhly depreciated the gifts of nature. He allows the quality of courage its utmoſt due, but deſires the ſame juſtice to thoſe ſofter accompliſhments, which he lets him know are no leſs the favour of heaven. Then he removes

from

But who like thee can boaſt a ſoul ſedate.
So firmly proof to all the ſhocks of fate!
Thy force, like ſteel, a temper'd hardneſs ſhows,
Still edge'd to wound, and ſtill untir'd with blows,
Like ſteel, uplifted by ſome ſtrenuous ſwain,
With falling woods to ſtrow the waſted plain.
Thy gifts I praiſe; nor thou deſpiſe the charms
With which a lover golden Venus arms;
Soft moving ſpeech, and pleaſing outward ſhow,
No wiſh can gain 'em, but the Gods beſtow.
Yet, would'ſt thou have the proffer'd combat ſtand,
The Greeks and Trojans ſeat on either hand;
Then let a mid-way ſpace our hoſts divide,
And, on that ſtage of war, the cauſe be try'd:
By Paris there the Spartan king be fought,
For beauteous Helen and the wealth ſhe brought;
And who his rival can in arms ſubdue,
His be the fair, and his the treaſure too.
Thus with a laſting league your toils may ceaſe,
And Troy poſſeſs her fertile fields in peace;
Thus may the Greeks review their native ſhore,
Much fam'd for gen'rous ſteeds, for beauty more.

from himſelf the charge of want of valour, by propoſing the ſingle combat with the very man he had juſt declined to engage; which having ſhewn him void of any malevolence to his rival on the one hand, he now proves himſelf free from the imputation of cowardice on the other. Homer draws him (as we have ſeen) ſoft of ſpeech, the natural quality of an amorous temper; vainly gay in war as well as love; with a ſpirit that can be ſurpriſed and recollected, that can receive impreſſions of ſhame or apprehenſion on the one ſide, or of generoſity and courage on the other: the uſual diſpoſition of eaſy and courteous minds, which are moſt ſubject to the rule of fancy and paſſion. Upon the whole, this is no worſe than the picture of a *gentle knight*, and one might fancy the heroes of the modern romance were formed upon the model of Paris.

He

He ſaid. The challenge Hector heard with joy.
Then with his ſpear reſtrain'd the youth of Troy,
Held by the midſt, athwart; and near the foe.
Advance'd with ſteps majeſtically ſlow.
While round his dauntleſs head the Grecians pour
Their ſtones and arrows in a mingled ſhow'er.
Then thus the monarch great Atrides cry'd;
Forbear, ye warriors! lay the darts aſide:
A parley Hector aſks, a meſſage bears;
We know him by the various plume he wears.
Aw'd by his high command the Greeks attend,
The tumult ſilence, and the fight ſuſpend.
While from the centre Hector rolls his eyes
On either hoſt, and thus to both applies.
Hear, all ye Trojans, all ye Grecian bands!
What Paris, author of the war, demands.
Your ſhining ſwords within the ſheath reſtrain,
And pitch your lances in the yielding plain.
Here, in the midſt, in either army's ſight,
He dares the Spartan king to ſingle fight;

Ver. 109. *The challenge Hector heard with joy.*] Hector ſtays not to reply to his brother, but runs away with the challenge immediately. He looks upon all the Trojans as diſgraced by the late flight of Paris, and thinks not a moment is to be loſt to regain the honour of his country. The activity he ſhews in all this affair wonderfully agrees with the ſpirit of a ſoldier.

Ver. 123. *Hear, all ye Trojans, all ye Grecian bands.*] It has been aſked how the different nations could underſtand one another in theſe conferences, ſince we have no mention in Homer of any interpreter between them? He who was ſo very particular in the moſt minute points, can hardly be thought to have been negligent in this. Some reaſons may be offered that they both ſpoke the ſame language; for the Trojans (as may be ſeen in Dion. Halic. lib. 1.) were of Grecian extraction originally. Dardanus the firſt of their kings was born in Arcadia; and even their names were originally Greek, as Hector, Anchiſes, Andromache, Aſtyanax, &c.

And

And wills, that Helen and the raviſh'd ſpoil
That caus'd the conteſt, ſhall reward the toil.
Let theſe the brave triumphant victor grace,
And differing nations part in leagues of peace.
He ſpoke: in ſtill ſuſpenſe on either ſide
Each army ſtood: The Spartan chief reply'd.
Me too ye warriors hear, whoſe fatal right
A world engages in the toils of fight.

To

Ver. 135. *Me too ye warriors, hear,* &c.] We may obſerve what care Homer takes to give every one his proper character, and how this ſpeech of Menelaus is adapted to the Laconic; which the better to comprehend, we may remember there are in Homer three ſpeakers of different characters, agreeable to the three different kinds of eloquence. Theſe we may compare with each other in one inſtance, ſuppoſing them all to uſe the ſame heads, and in the ſame order.

The materials of the ſpeech are, The manifeſting his grief for the war, with the hopes that it is in his power to end it; an acceptance of the propoſed challenge; an account of the ceremonies to be uſed in the league; and a propoſal of a proper caution to ſecure it.

Now had Neſtor theſe materials to work upon, he would probably have begun with a relation of all the troubles of the nine year's ſiege, which he hoped he might now bring to an end; he would court their benevolence and good wiſhes for his proſperity, with all the figures of amplification; while he accepted the challenge, he would have given an example to prove that the ſingle combat was a wiſe, gallant, and gentle way of ending the war, practiſed by their fathers; in the deſcription of the rites he would be exceeding particular; and when he choſe to demand the ſanction of Priam rather than of his ſons, he would place in oppoſition on one ſide the ſon's action which began the war, and on the other the impreſſions of concern or repentance which it muſt by this time have made in the father's mind, whoſe wiſdom he would undoubtedly extol as the effect of his age. All this he would have expatiated upon with connexions of the diſcourſes in the moſt evident manner, and the moſt eaſy, gliding undiſobliging tranſitions. The effect would be, that the people would hear him with pleaſure.

have

To me the labour of the field reſign;
Me Paris injur'd; all the war be mine.
Fall he that muſt, beneath his rival's arms,
And live the reſt ſecure of future harms.
Two lambs, devoted by your country's rite,
To Earth a ſable, to the Sun a white.
Prepare, ye Trojans! while a third we bring
Select to Jove, th' inviolable king.
Let rev'rend Priam in the truce engage,
And add the ſanction of conſiderate age;
His ſons are faithleſs, headlong in debate.
And youth itſelf an empty wav'ring ſtate:

Had it been Ulyſſes who was to make the ſpeech, he would have mentioned a few of their affecting calamities in a pathetic air; then have undertaken the fight with teſtifying ſuch a chearful joy, as ſhould have won the hearts of the ſoldiers to follow him to the field without being deſired. He would have been exceeding cautious in wording the conditions; and ſolemn, rather than particular, in ſpeaking of the rites, which he would only inſiſt on as an opportunity to exhort both ſides to a fear of the Gods, and a ſtrict regard of juſtice. He would have remonſtrated the uſe of ſending for Priam; and (becauſe no caution could be too much) have demanded his ſons to be bound with him. For a concluſion, he would have uſed ſome noble ſentiment agreeable to a hero, and (it may be) have inforced it with ſome inſpirited action. In all this you would have known that the diſcourſe hung together, but its fire would not always ſuffer it to be ſeen in cooler tranſitions, which (when they are too nicely laid open) may conduct the reader, but never carry him away. The people would hear him with emotion.

Theſe materials being given to Menelaus, he but juſt mentions their troubles, and his ſatisfaction in the proſpect of ending them. ſhortens the propoſals, ſays a ſacrifice is neceſſary, requires Priam's preſence to confirm the conditions, refuſes his ſons with a reſentment of that injury he ſuffer'd by them, and concludes with a reaſon for his choice from the praiſe of age, with a ſhort gravity, and the air of an apophlegm. This he puts in order without any more tranſition than what a ſingle conjunction affords. And the effect of the diſcourſe is, that the people are inſtructed by it in what is to be done.

Cool

Cool age advances venerably wiſe,
Turns on all hands its deep diſcerning eyes;
Sees what befel, and what may yet befal,
Concludes from both, and beſt provides for all.
The nations hear, with riſing hopes poſſeſt,
And peaceful proſpects dawn in ev'ry breaſt.
Within the lines they drew their ſteeds around,
And from their chariots iſſu'd on the ground:
Next all unbuckling the rich mail they wore,
Lay'd their bright arms along the ſable ſhore.
On either ſide the meeting hoſts are ſeen,
With lances fix'd, and cloſe the ſpace between.
Two heralds now diſpatch'd to Troy, invite
The Phrygian monarch to the peaceful rite;
Talthybius haſtens to the fleet, to bring
The lamb for Jove, th' inviolable king.
Mean-time, to beauteous Helen, from the ſkies
The various goddeſs of the rainbow flies;

(Like

Ver. 153. *The nations hear, with riſing hopes poſſeſt.*] It ſeemed no more than what the reader would reaſonably expect, in the narration of this long war, that a period might have been put to it by the ſingle danger of the parties chiefly concerned, Paris and Menelaus. Homer has therefore taken care toward the beginning of his poem to obviate that objection; and contrived ſuch a method to render this combat of no effect, as ſhould naturally make way for all the enſuing battles, without any future proſpect of a determination but by the ſword. It is farther worth obſerving, in what manner he has improved into poetry the common hiſtory of this action, if (as one may imagine) it was the ſame with that we have in the ſecond book of Dictys Cretenſis. "When Paris (ſays he) "being wounded by the ſpear of Menelaus fell to the "ground, juſt as his adverſary was ruſhing upon him with his "ſword, he was ſhot by an arrow from Pandarus, which prevented his revenge in the moment he was going to take it. Immediately on the ſight of this perfidious action, the Greeks roſe in a tumult: the Trojans riſing at the ſame time, came on, and reſcued Paris from his enemy."

Ver. 165. *Mean time, to beauteous Helen,* &c.] The following part,

(Like fair Laodice in form and face,
The lovelieſt nymph of Priam's royal race)
Her in the palace, at her loom ſhe found;
The golden web her own ſad ſtory crown'd.
The Trojan wars ſhe weav'd (herſelf the prize)
And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.
To whom the Goddeſs of the painted bow;
Approach, and view the wond'rous ſcene below!
Each hardy Greek, and valiant Trojan knight,
So dreadful late, and furious for the fight,
Now reſt their ſpears, or lean upon their ſhields;
Ceas'd is the war, and ſilent all the fields.
Paris alone and Sparta's king advance,
In ſingle fight to toſs the beamy lance;
Each met in arms the fate of combat tries,
Thy love the motive, and thy charms the prize.
This ſaid, the many-colour'd maid inſpires
Her huſband's love, and wakes her former fires;
Her country, parents, all that once were dear,
Ruſh to her thought, and force a tender tear.
O'er her fair face a ſnowy veil ſhe threw,
And, ſoftly ſighing, from the loom withdrew.

part, where we have the firſt ſight of Helena, is what I cannot think inferior to any in the poem. The reader has naturally an averſion to this pernicious beauty, and is apt enough to wonder at the Greeks for endeavouring to recover her at ſuch an expence. But her amiable behaviour here, the ſecret wiſhes that riſe in favour of her rightful lord, her tenderneſs for her parents and relations, the relentings of her ſoul for the miſchiefs her beauty had been the cauſe of, the confuſion ſhe appears in, the veiling her face, and dropping a tear, are particulars ſo beautifully natural, as to make every reader, no leſs than Menelaus himſelf, inclined to forgive her at laſt, if not to love her.

Ver. 170. *The golden web her own ſad ſtory crown'd.*] This is a very agreeable fiction, to repreſent Helena weaving in a large vail, or piece of tapeſtry, the ſtory of the Trojan war. One would think that Homer inherited this veil, and that his Iliad is only an explication of that admirable piece of art. Dacier.

Her handmaids Clymene and Æthra wait
Her ſilent footſteps to the Scæan gate.
There ſat the ſeniors of the Trojan race,
(Old Priam's chiefs, and moſt in Priam's grace)
The king the firſt; Thymœtes at his ſide;
Lampus and Clytius, long in council try'd;
Panthus, and Hicetaon, once the ſtrong;
And next, the wiſeſt of the rev'rend throng,
Antenor grave, and ſage Ucalegon,
Lean'd on the walls, and baſk'd before the ſun.
Chiefs, who no more in bloody fights engage,
But wiſe thro' time, and narrative with age,
In ſummer-days, like graſhoppers rejoice,
A bloodleſs race, that ſend a feeble voice.
Theſe, when the Spartan queen approach'd the tow'r
In ſecret own'd reſiſtleſs beauty's pow'r:

They

Ver. 201. *Like graſhoppers.*] This is one of the juſteſt and moſt natural images in the world, though there have been critics of ſo little taſte as to object to it as a mean one. The garrulity ſo common to old men, their delight in aſſociating with each other the feeble ſound of their voices, the pleaſure they take in a funſhiny day, the effects of decay in their chillneſs, leanneſs and ſcarcity of blood, are all circumſtances exactly paralleled in this compariſon.

Ver. 203. *Theſe, when the Spartan queen approached.*] Madam Dacier is of opinion there was never a greater panegyric upon beauty, than what Homer has found the art to give it in this place. An aſſembly of venerable old counſellors, who had ſuffered all the calamities of a tedious war, and were conſulting upon the methods to put a concluſion to it, ſeeing the only cauſe of its approaching towards them, are ſtruck with her charms, and cry out, *No wonder!* &c. Nevertheleſs they afterwards recollect themſelves, and conclude to part with her for the public ſafety. If Homer had carried theſe old mens admiration any farther, he had been guilty of outraging nature, and offending againſt probability. The old are capable of being touched with beauty by the eye; but age ſecures them from the tyranny of paſſion, and the effect is but tra. ſtory,

They cry'd, No wonder, ſuch celeſtial charms
For nine long years have ſet the world in arms;
What winning graces! what majeſtic mien!
She moves a goddeſs, and ſhe looks a queen!
Yet hence, oh heav'n! convey that fatal face,
And from deſtruction ſave the Trojan race.

The good old Priam welcom'd her, and cry'd,
Approach, my child, and grace thy father's ſide.
See on the plain thy Grecian ſpouſe appears,
The friends and kindred of thy former years.
No crime of thine our preſent ſuff'rings draws,
Not thou, but heav'n's diſpoſing will, the cauſe;
The Gods theſe armies and this force employ,
The hoſtile Gods conſpire the fate of Troy.
But lift thy eyes, and ſay, What Greek is he
(Far as from hence theſe aged orbs can ſee)
Around

tranſitory, for prudence ſoon regains its dominion over them. Homer always goes as far as he ſhould, but conſtantly ſtops juſt where he ought. Dacier,

Ver. 211. *The good old Priam.*] The character of a benevolent old man is very well preſerved in Priam's behaviour to Helena. Upon the confuſion he obſerves her in, he encourages her, by attributing the misfortunes of the war to the Gods alone, and not to her fault. This ſentiment is alſo very agreeable to the natural piety of old age; thoſe who have had the longeſt experience of human accidents and events, being moſt inclined to aſcribe the diſpoſal of all things to the will of heaven.

Ver. 219. *And ſay, what chief is he?*] This view of the Grecian leaders from the walls of Troy, is juſtly looked upon as an epiſode of great beauty, as well as a maſter-piece of conduct in Homer; who by this means acquaints the readers with the figure and qualifications of each hero in a more lively and agreeable manner. Several great poets have been engaged by the beauty of this paſſage to an imitation of it. In the ſeventh book of Statius, Phorbas ſtanding with Antigone on the tower of Thebes, ſhews her the forces as they were drawn up, and deſcribes their commanders who were neighbouring princes of Boeotia. It is alſo imi-

Around whoſe brow ſuch martial graces ſhine,
So tall, ſo awful, and almoſt divine?
Tho' ſome of larger ſtature tread the green,
None match his grandeur and exalted mien:
He ſeems a monarch, and his country's pride.
Thus ceas'd the king, and thus the fair reply'd.
Before thy preſence, father, I appear
With conſcious ſhame and reverential fear.
Ah! had I dy'd, ere to theſe walls I fled,
Falſe to my country, and my nuptial bed,
My brothers, friends, and daughter left behind,
Falſe to them all, to Paris only kind!
For this I mourn, till grief or dire diſeaſe
Shall waſte the form whoſe crime it was to pleaſe!
The king of kings, Atrides, you ſurvey,
Great in the war, and great in arts of ſway:
My brother once, before my days of ſhame;
And oh! that ſtill he bore a brother's name!

tated by Taſſo in his third book, where Erminia from the walls of Jeruſalem points out the chief warriors to the king; though the latter part is perhaps copied too cloſely and minutely; for he deſcribes Godfrey to be of a port that beſpeaks him a prince, the next of ſomewhat a lower ſtature, a third renown'd for his wiſdom, and then another is diſtinguiſhed by the largeneſs of his cheſt and breadth of his ſhoulders: which are not only the very particulars, but in the very order of Homer's.

Ver. 227. *Before thy preſence.*] Helen is ſo overwhelmed with grief and ſhame, that ſhe is unable to give a direct anſwer to Priam without firſt humbling herſelf before him, acknowledging her crime, and teſtifying her repentance. And ſhe no ſooner anſwers by naming Agamemnon, but her ſorrows renew at the name; *He was once my brother, but I am now a wretch unworthy to call him ſo.*

Ver. 236. *Great in the war, and great in arts of ſway.*] This was the verſe which Alexander the great preferred to all others in Homer, and which he propoſed as the pattern of his own actions, as including whatever can be deſired in a prince.

With

With wonder Priam view'd the God-like man,
Extoll'd the happy prince, and thus began.
O bleſt Atrides! born to proſp'rous fate,
Succeſsful monarch of a mighty ſtate!
How vaſt thy empire? of yon matchleſs train
What numbers loſt, what numbers yet remain?
In Phrygia once were gallant armies known,
In ancient time, when Otreus fill'd the throne,
When God-like Mygdon led their troops of horſe,
And I, to join them, rais'd the Trojan force:
Againſt the manlike Amazons we ſtood,
And Sangar's ſtream ran purple with their blood.
But far inferior thoſe, in martial grace,
And ſtrength of numbers, to this Grecian race.
This ſaid, once more he view'd the warrior-train:
What's he, whoſe arms lie ſcatter'd on the plain?
Broad is his breaſt, his ſhoulders larger ſpread,
Tho' great Atrides overtops his head.
Nor yet appear his care and conduct ſmall;
From rank to rank he moves, and orders all.

Ver. 240. *Extoll'd the happy prince.*] It was very natural for Priam on this occaſion, to compare the declining condition of his kingdom with the flouriſhing ſtate of Agamemnon's, and to oppoſe his own miſery (who had loſt moſt of his ſons and his braveſt warriors) to the felicity of the other, in being yet maſter of ſo gallant an army. After this the humour of old age breaks out, in the narration of what armies he had formerly ſeen, and bore a part in the command of; as well as what feats of valour he had then performed. Beſides which, this praiſe of the Greeks from the mouth of an enemy, was no ſmall encomium of Homer's countrymen.

Ver. 258. *From rank to rank he moves.*] The vigilance and inſpection of Ulyſſes were very proper marks to diſtinguiſh him, and agree with his character of a wiſe man, no leſs than the grandeur and majeſty before deſcribed are conformable to that of Agamemnon, as the ſupreme ruler; whereas we find Ajax afterwards taken notice of only for his bulk, as a heavy hero without parts or authority. This decorum is obſervable.

The ſtately ram thus meaſures o'er the ground,
And, maſter of the flock, ſurveys them round.
Then Helen thus. Whom your diſcerning eyes
Have ſingled out, is Ithacus the wiſe:
A barren iſland boaſts his glorious birth;
His fame for wiſdom fills the ſpacious earth.
Antenor took the word, and thus began:
Myſelf, O king! have ſeen that wond'rous man;
When truſting Jove and hoſpitable laws,
To Troy he came, to plead the Grecian cauſe;
(Great Menelaus urge'd the ſame requeſt)
My houſe was honour'd with each royal gueſt:
I knew their perſons, and admir'd their parts,
Both brave in arms, and both approv'd in arts.
Erect, the Spartan moſt engage'd our view;
Ulyſſes ſeated, greater rev'rence drew.
When Atreus' ſon harrangu'd the liſt'ning train,
Juſt was his ſenſe, and his expreſſion plain,
His words ſuccinct, yet full, without a fault;
He ſpoke no more than juſt the thing he ought.

Ver. 271. *I knew their perſons*, &c.] In this view of the leaders of the army, it had been an overſight in Homer to have taken no notice of Menelaus, who was not only one of the principal of them, but was immediately to engage the obſervation of the reader in the ſingle combat. On the other hand, it had been a high indecorum to have made Helena ſpeak of him. He has therefore put his praiſes into the mouth of Antenor; which was alſo a more artful way than to have preſented him to the eye of Priam in the ſame manner with the reſt. It appears from hence, what a regard he has had both to decency and variety, in the conduct of his poem.

This paſſage concerning the different eloquence of Menelaus and Ulyſſes is inexpreſſibly juſt and beautiful. The cloſe laconic conſciouſneſs of the one, is finely oppoſed to the copious, vehement, and penetrating oratory of the other; which is ſo exquiſitely deſcribed in the ſimile of the ſnow falling *faſt*, and ſinking *deep*.

But

But when Ulyſſes roſe, in thought profound,
His modeſt eyes he fix'd upon the ground,
As one unſkill'd or dumb, he ſeem'd to ſtand,
Nor rais'd his head, nor ſtretch'd his ſcepter'd hand.
But, when he ſpeaks, what elocution flows!
Soft as the fleeces of deſcending ſnows,
The copious accents fall, with eaſy art;
Melting they fall, and ſink into the heart!
Wond'ring we hear, and fix'd in deep ſurprize;
Our ears refute the cenſure of our eyes.
The king then aſk'd (as yet the camp he view'd)
What chief is that, with giant-ſtrength endu'd,
Whoſe brawny ſhoulders, and whoſe ſwelling cheſt,
And lofty ſtature, far exceed the reſt?
Ajax the great (the beauteous Queen reply'd)
Himſelf a hoſt: the Grecian ſtrength and pride.
See! bold Idomeneus ſuperior tow'rs
Amidſt yon circle of his Cretan pow'rs.
Great as a God! I ſaw him once before,
With Menelaus, on the Spartan ſhore.
The reſt I know, and could in order name;
All valiant chiefs, and men of mighty fame.
Yet two are wanting of the num'rous train,
Whom long my eyes have ſought, but ſought in vain;
Caſtor and Polux, firſt in martial force,
One bold on foot, and one renown'd for horſe,

Ver. 280. *His modeſt eyes*, &c.] What follows in the Greek, tranſlated word for word, runs thus: *He ſeem'd like a fool, you would have thought him in a rage, or a madman.* How oddly this would appear in our language, I appeal to thoſe who have read Ogilvy. The whole period means no more than to deſcribe that behaviour which is commonly remarked in a modeſt and ſenſible man, who ſpeaks in public: his diffidence and reſpect give him at his firſt riſing a ſort of confuſion, which is not indecent, and which ſerves but the more to heighten the ſurprize and eſteem of thoſe who hear him.

My brothers theſe; the ſame our native ſhore,
One houſe contain'd us, as one mother bore.
Perhaps the chiefs, from warlike toils at eaſe,
For diſtant Troy refus'd to ſail the ſeas:
Perhaps their ſwords ſome nobler quarrel draws,
Aſham'd to combat in their ſiſter's cauſe.

So ſpoke the fair, nor knew her brothers doom,
Wrapt in the cold embraces of the tomb;
Adorn'd with honours in their native ſhore,
Silent they ſlept, and heard of wars no more.

Meantime the heralds, thro' the crouded town,
Bring the rich wine and deſtin'd victims down.
Idæus' arms the golden goblets preſt,
Who thus the venerable king addreſt.
Ariſe, O father of the Trojan ſtate!
The nations call, thy joyful people wait;
To ſeal the truce, and end the dire debate.
Paris thy ſon, and Sparta's king advance,
In meaſur'd liſts to toſs the weighty lance;
And who his rival ſhall in arms ſubdue,
His be the dame, and his the treaſure too.
Thus with a laſting league our toils may ceaſe,
And Troy poſſeſs her fertile fields in peace;

Ver. 309. *Perhaps their ſwords.*] This is another ſtroke of Helen's concern: the ſenſe of her crime is perpetually afflicting her, and awakes upon every occaſion. The lines that follow, wherein Homer gives us to underſtand that Caſtor and Pollux were now dead, are finely introduced, and in the ſpirit of poetry; the muſe is ſuppoſed to know every thing, paſt and to come, and to ſee things diſtant as well as preſent.

Ver. 315. *Mean time the heralds,* &c.] It may not be unpleaſing to the reader to compare the deſcription of the ceremonies of the league in the following part, with that of Virgil in the twelfth book. The preparations, the proceſſion of the kings, and their congreſs, are much more ſolemn and poetical in the latter; the oath and adjurations are equally noble in both.

So

So ſhall the Greeks review their native ſhore,
Much fam'd for gen'rous ſteeds, for beauty more.
With grief he heard, and bade the chiefs prepare
To join his milk-white courſers to the car:
He mounts the ſeat, Antenor at his ſide;
The gentle ſteeds thro' Scæa's gates they guide:
Next from the car deſcending on the plain,
Amid the Grecian hoſt and Trojan train
Slow they proceed: the ſage Ulyſſes then
Aroſe, and with him roſe the king of men.
On either ſide a ſacred herald ſtands,
The wine they mix, and on each monarch's hands
Pour the full urn; then draws the Grecian lord
His cutlace ſheath'd beſide his pond'rous ſword;
From the ſign'd victims crops the curling hair,
The heralds part it, and the princes ſhare;
Then loudly thus before th' attentive bands
He calls the Gods, and ſpreads his lifted hands.
O firſt and greateſt pow'r! whom all obey,
Who high on Ida's holy mountain ſway
Eternal Jove! and you bright orb that roll
From eaſt to weſt, and view from pole to pole!
Thou mother Earth! and all ye living Floods!
Infernal Furies, and Tartarean Gods,

Ver. 342. *The curling hair.*] We have here the whole ceremonial of the ſolemn oath, as it was obſerved anciently by the nations our author deſcribes. I muſt take this occaſion of remarking, that we might ſpare ourſelves the trouble of reading moſt books of Grecian antiquities, only by being well verſed in Homer. They are generally bare tranſcriptions of him, but with this unneceſſary addition, that after having quoted any thing in verſe, they ſay the ſame over again in proſe. The *Antiquitates Homericæ* of Foithius may ſerve as an inſtance of this. What my lord Bacon obſerves of authors in general, is particularly applicable to theſe of antiquities, that they write for oſtentation not for inſtruction, and that their works are perpetual repetitions.

Who rule the dead, and horrid woes prepare
For perjur'd kings, and all who falſely ſwear!
Hear, and be witneſs. If, by Paris ſlain,
Great Menelaus preſs the fatal plain;
The dame and treaſures let the Trojan keep,
And Greece returning plow the watry deep.
If by my brother's lance the Trojan bleed;
Be his the wealth and beauteous dame decreed:
Th' appointed fine let Ilion juſtly pay,
And ev'ry age record the ſignal day.
This if the Phrygians ſhall refuſe to yield,
Arms muſt revenge, and Mars decide the field.
With that the chief the tender victims ſlew,
And in the duſt their bleeding bodies threw:
The vital ſpirit iſſu'd at the wound,
And left the members quiv'ring on the ground.
From the ſame urn they drink the mingled wine,
And add libations to the pow'rs divine.
While thus their pray'rs united mount the ſky;
Hear mighty Jove! and hear ye Gods on high!

Ver. 361. *And ev'ry age record the ſignal day.*] This ſeems the natural ſenſe of the line, and not as Madam Dacier renders it, *The tribute ſhall be paid to the poſterity of the Greeks for ever.* I think ſhe is ſingle in that explication, the majority of the interpreters taking it to ſignify that the victory of the Grecians and this pecuniary acknowledgement *ſhould be recorded to all poſterity.* If it means any more than this, at leaſt it cannot come up to the ſenſe. Madam Dacier gives it; for a nation put under perpetual tribute is rather inſlaved, than received to friendſhip and alliance, which are the terms of Agamenon's ſpeech. It ſeems rather to be a fine, demanded as a recompence for the expences of the war, which being made over to the Greeks, ſhould *remain to their poſterity for ever:* that is to ſay, which they ſhould never be moleſted for, or which ſhould never be re-demanded in any age as a caſe of injury. The The phraſe is the ſame we uſe at this day, when any purchaſe or grant is at once made over to a man *and his heirs for ever.* With this will agree the ſcholiaſts note, which tells us the mulct was reported to have been half the goods then in the beſieged city.

And

And may their blood, who firſt the league confound,
Shed like this wine, diſtain the thirſty ground;
And all their conſorts ſerve promiſcuous luſt,
May all their race be ſcatter'd as the duſt!
Thus either hoſt their imprecations join'd,
Which Jove refus'd, and mingled with the wind.
The rites now finiſh'd, rev'rend Priam roſe,
And thus expreſs'd a heart o'ercharge'd with woes.
Ye Greeks and Trojans, let the chiefs engage,
But ſpare the weakneſs of my feeble age:
In yonder walls that object let me ſhun,
Nor view the danger of ſo dear a ſon.
Whoſe arms ſhall conquer, and what prince ſhall fall,
Heav'n only knows, for heav'n diſpoſes all.
This ſaid, the hoary king no longer ſtay'd,
But on his car the ſlaughter'd victims laid;
Then ſeiz'd the reigns his gentle ſteeds to guide,
And drove to Troy, Antenor at his ſide.
Bold Hector and Ulyſſes now diſpoſe
The liſts of combat, and the ground incloſe;
Next to decide by ſacred lots prepare,
Who firſt ſhall launch his pointed ſpear in air.
The people pray with elevated hands,
And words like theſe are heard thro' all the bands.
Immortal Jove, high heav'n ſuperior lord,
On lofty Ida's holy mount ador'd!
Whoe'er involv'd us in this dire debate,
Oh give that author of the war to fate
And ſhades eternal! let diviſion ceaſe,
And joyful nations join in leagues of peace.
With eyes averted Hector haſtes to turn
The lots of fight, and ſhakes the brazen urn.
Then, Paris, thine leap'd forth; by fatal chance
Ordain'd the firſt to whirl the weighty lance.

Both armies ſat, the combat to ſurvey,
Beſide each chief his azure armour lay,
And round the liſts the gen'rous courſers neigh.
The beauteous warrior now arrays for fight,
In gilded arms magnificently bright:
The purple cuiſhes claſp his thighs around,
With flow'rs adorn'd, with ſilver buckles bound:
Lycaon's cors'let his fair body dreſt,
Brace'd in, and fitted to his ſofter breaſt;
A radiant baldric, o'er his ſhoulder ty'd,
Suſtain'd the ſword that glitter'd at his ſide:
His youthful face a poliſh'd helm o'erſpread;
The waving horſe-hair nodded on his head;
His figur'd ſhield, a ſhining orb, he takes,
And in his hand a pointed jav'lin ſhakes.
With equal ſpeed, and fir'd by equal charms,
The Spartan hero ſheaths his limbs in arms.
Now round the liſts th' admiring armies ſtand,
With jav'lins fix'd, the Greek and Trojan band.
Amidſt the dreadful vale, the chiefs advance,
All pale with rage, and ſhake the threat'ning lance.
The Trojan firſt his ſhining jav'lin threw;
Full on Atrides' ringing ſhield it flew,
Nor pierce'd the brazen orb, but with a bound
Leap'd from the buckler blunted on the ground.
Atrides then his maſſy lance prepares,
In act to throw, but firſt prefers his pray'rs.
Give me, great Jove! to puniſh lawleſs luſt,
And lay the Trojan gaſping in the duſt:
Deſtroy th'aggreſſor, aid my righteous cauſe,
Avenge the breach of hoſpitable laws!

Ver. 433. *Give me, great Jove.*] Homer puts a prayer in the mouth of Menelaus, but none in Paris's: Menelaus is the perſon injured and innocent, and may therefore apply to God for juſtice; but Paris, who is the criminal, remains ſilent. Spondanus.

Let

Let this example future times reclaim,
And guard from wrong fair friendſhip's holy name.
He ſaid, and pois'd in air the jav'lin ſent,
Thro' Paris' ſhield the forceful weapon went,
His cors'let pierces, and his garment rends,
And glancing downward, near his flank deſcends.
The wary Trojan bending from the blow,
Eludes the death, and diſappoints his foe:
But fierce Atrides wav'd his ſword, and ſtrook
Full on his caſque; the creſted helmet ſhook;
The brittle ſteel, unfaithful to his hand,
Broke ſhort: the fragments glitter'd on the ſand.
The raging warrior to the ſpacious ſkies
Rais'd his upbraiding voice, and angry eyes:
Then is it vain in Jove himſelf to truſt?
And is it thus the Gods aſſiſt the juſt?
When crimes provoke us, heav'n ſucceſs denies;
The dart falls harmleſs, and the faulchion flies.
Furious he ſaid, and tow'rd the Grecian crew
(Seiz'd by the creſt) th' unhappy warrior drew;
Struggling he follow'd, while th' embroider'd thong,
That ty'd his helmet, dragg'd the chief along.
Then had his ruin crown'd Atrides' joy.
But Venus trembled for the prince of Troy:
Unſeen ſhe came, and burſt the golden band;
And left an empty helmet in his hand.
The caſque, enrage'd, amidſt the Greeks he threw;
The Greeks with ſmiles the poliſh'd trophy view.
Then, as once more he lifts the deadly dart,
In thirſt of vengeance, at his rival's heart,

Ver. 447. *The brittle ſteel, unfaithful to his hand, Broke ſhort*——] This verſe is cut, to expreſs the thing it deſcribes, the ſnapping ſhort of the ſword. It is the obſervation of Euſtathius on this line of the original, that we do not only ſee the action, but imagine we hear the ſound of the breaking ſword in that of the words.

The queen of love her favour'd champion ſhrouds
(For Gods can all things) in a veil of clouds.
Rais'd from the field the panting youth ſhe led,
And gently laid him on the bridal bed,
With pleaſing ſweets his fainting ſenſe renews,
And all the domes perfumes with heav'nly dews.
Mean time the brighteſt of the female kind,
The matchleſs Helen o'er the walls reclin'd:
To her, beſet with Trojan beauties, came,
In borrow'd form the * laughter-loving dame.
(She ſeem'd an ancient maid, well-ſkill'd to cull
The ſnowy fleece, and wind the twiſted wool.)
The goddeſs ſoftly ſhook her ſilken veſt,
That ſhed perfumes, and whiſp'ring thus addreſt.
Haſte, happy nymph! for thee thy Paris calls,
Safe from the fight, in yonder lofty walls,
Fair as a God! with odours round him ſpread
He lies, and waits thee on the well-known bed:
Not like a warrior parted from the foe,
But ſome gay dancer in the public ſhow.

* Venus.

Ver. 479. *The goddeſs ſoftly ſhook*, &c.] Venus having conveyed Paris in ſafety to his chamber, goes to Helena, who had been ſpectator of his defeat, in order to draw her to his love. The better to bring this about, ſhe firſt takes upon her the moſt proper form in the world, that of a favourite ſervant-maid, and awakens her paſſion by repreſenting to her the beautiful figure of his perſon. Next, aſſuming her own ſhape, ſhe frightens her into a compliance, notwithſtanding all the ſtruggles of ſhame, fear, and anger, which break out in her ſpeech to the goddeſs. This machine is allegorical, and means no more than the power of love triumphing over all the conſiderations of honour, eaſe, and ſafety. It has an excellent effect as to the poem, in preſerving ſtill in ſome degree our good opinion of Helena, whom we look upon with compaſſion, as conſtrained by a ſuperior power, and whoſe ſpeech tends to juſtify her in the eye of the reader.

She

She ſpoke, and Helen's ſecret ſoul was mov'd:
She ſcorn'd the champion, but the man ſhe lov'd.
Fair Venus' neck, her eyes that ſparkled fire,
And breaſt reveal'd the queen of ſoft deſire.
Struck with her preſence, ſtrait the lively red
Forſook her cheek; and trembling, thus ſhe ſaid.
Then is it ſtill thy pleaſure to deceive?
And woman's frailty always to believe?
Say, to new nations muſt I croſs the main,
Or carry wars to ſome ſoft Aſian plain?
For whom muſt Helen break her ſecond vow?
What other Paris is thy darling now?
Left to Atrides (victor in the ſtrife)
An odious conqueſt and a captive wife,
Hence let me fail: and if thy Paris bear
My abſence ill, let Venus eaſe his care.
A hand-maid goddeſs at his ſide to wait,
Renounce the glories of thy heav'nly ſtate,
Be fix'd for ever to the Trojan ſhore,
His ſpouſe or ſlave; and mount the ſkies no more.
For me, to lawleſs love no longer led,
I ſcorn the coward, and deteſt his bed;

Elſe

Ver. 487. *She ſpoke, and Helen's ſecret ſoul was mov'd.*] Nothing is more fine than this; the firſt thought of Paris's beauty overcomes (unawares to herſelf) the contempt ſhe had that moment conceived of him upon his overthrow. This motion is but natural, and before ſhe perceives the Deity. When the affections of a woman have been thoroughly gained, though they may be alienated for a while, they ſoon return upon her. *Homer knew* (ſays Madam Dacier) *what a woman is capable of, who had once loved.*

Ver. 507. *For me, to lawleſs love, no longer led, I ſcorn the coward.*] We have here another branch of the female character, which is, to be ruled in their attaches by ſucceſs. Helen, finding the victory belonged to Menelaus, accuſes herſelf ſecretly of having forſaken him for the other, and immediately entertains a high opinion of the man ſhe had once deſpiſed. One may add, that the fair ſex

Elſe ſhould I merit everlaſting ſhame,
And keen reproach, from ev'ry Phrygian dame:
Ill ſuits it now the joys of love to know
Too deep my anguiſh, and too wild my woe.
Then thus incens'd, the Paphian queen replies;
Obey the pow'r from whom thy glories riſe:
Should Venus leave thee, ev'ry charm muſt fly,
Fade from thy cheek, and languiſh in thy eye.
Ceaſe to provoke me, leſt I make thee more
The world's averſion, than their love before;
Now the bright prize for which mankind engage,
Then the ſad victim of the public rage.
At this, the faireſt of her ſex obey'd,
And veil'd her bluſhes in a ſilken ſhade;
Unſeen, and ſilent, from the train ſhe moves,
Led by the goddeſs of the ſmiles and loves,
Arriv'd, and enter'd at the palace-gate,
The maids officious round their miſtreſs wait;
Then all diſperſing, various taſks attend;
The queen and goddeſs to the prince aſcend.
Full in her Paris's ſight, the queen of love
Had place'd the beauteous progeny of Jove;
Where, as he view'd her charms, ſhe turn'd away
Her glowing eyes, and thus began to ſay.

Is

are generally admirers of courage, and naturally friends to great ſoldiers. Paris was no longer ſtranger to this diſpoſition of them, and had formerly endeavoured to give his miſtreſs that opinion of him; as appears from her reproach of him afterwards.

Ver, 515. *Shou'd Venus leave thee, ev'ry charm muſt fly.*] This was the moſt dreadful of all threats, loſs of beauty and of reputation. Helen, who had been proof to the perſonal appearance of the Goddeſs, and durſt even reproach her with bitterneſs juſt before, yields to this, and obeys all the dictates of love.

Ver. 531. *She turn'd away her glowing eyes.*] This interview of the two lovers, placed oppoſite to each other, and overlooked by Venus, Paris gazing on Helena, ſhe turning away her eyes, ſhining at

once

Is this the chief, who loſt to ſenſe of ſhame,
Late fled the field, and yet ſurvives his fame!
Oh hadſt thou dy'd beneath the righteous ſword
Of that brave man whom once I call'd my lord!
The boaſter Paris oft' deſir'd the day
With Sparta's king to meet in ſingle fray:
Go now, once more thy rival's rage excite,
Provoke Atrides, and renew the fight;
Yet Helen bids thee ſtay, leſt thou unſkill'd
Should'ſt fall an eaſy conqueſt on the field.
The prince replies: Ah ceaſe, divinely fair,
Nor add reproaches to the wounds I bear;
This day the foe prevail'd by Pallas' pow'r;
We yet may vanguiſh in a happier hour:
There want not Gods to favour us above:
But let the bus'neſs of our life be love:
Theſe ſofter moments let delights employ,
And kind embraces ſnatch the haſty joy.
Not thus I lov'd thee, when from Sparta's ſhore
My force'd, my willing heav'nly prize I bore,
When

once with anger and love, are particulars finely drawn and painted up to all the life of nature. Euſtathius imagines ſhe looked aſide in the conſciouſneſs of her own weakneſs, as apprehending that the beauty of Paris might cauſe her to relent. Her burſting out into paſſion and reproaches while ſhe is in this ſtate of mind, is no ill picture of frailty: Venus (as Madam Dacier obſerves) does not leave her, and fondneſs will immediately ſucceed to theſe reproaches.

Ver. 543. *Ah ceaſe, divinely fair.*] This anſwer of Paris is the only one he could poſſibly have made with any ſucceſs in his circumſtance. There was no other method to reconcile her to him, but that which is generally moſt powerful with the ſex, and which Homer (who was learned every way) here makes uſe of.

Ver. 551. *Not thus I lov'd thee.*] However Homer may be admired for his conduct in this paſſage, I find a general outcry againſt Paris on this occaſion. Plutarch has led the way in his treatiſe of

When firſt entrance'd in Cranae's iſle I lay,
Mix'd with thy ſoul, and all diſſolv'd away!
Thus having ſpoke, th' enamour'd Phrygian boy
Ruſh'd to the bed, impatient for the joy.
Him Helen follow'd ſlow with baſhful charms,
And claſp'd the blooming hero in her arms.

reading poets, by remarking it as a moſt heinous act of incontinence in him, to go to bed to his lady in the day-time. Madam Dacier is alſo very ſevere upon Paris, but for a reaſon more natural to a lady: She is of opinion, that the paſſion of the lover would ſcarce have been ſo exceſſive as he here deſcribes it, but for fear of loſing his miſtreſs immediately, as foreſeeing the Greeks would demand her. One may anſwer to this lively remark, that Paris having nothing to ſay for himſelf, was obliged to teſtify an uncommon ardour for his lady, at a time when compliments were to paſs inſtead of reaſons. I hope to be excuſed, if (in revenge for her remark upon our ſex) I obſerve upon the behaviour of Helen throughout this book, which gives a pretty natural picture of the manners of theirs. We ſee her firſt in tears, repentant, covered with confuſion at the ſight of Priam, and ſecretly inclined to return to her former ſpouſe. The diſgrace of Paris increaſes her diſlike of him; ſhe rails, ſhe reproaches, ſhe wiſhes his death; and, after all, is prevailed upon by one kind compliment, and yields to his embraces. Methinks, when this lady's obſervation and mine are laid together, the beſt that can be made of them is to conclude, that ſince both the ſexes have their frailties, it would be well for each to forgive the other.

Ver. 553. *When firſt entrance'd in Cranae's iſle.*] It is in the original Νήσῳ δ' ἐν Κραναῇ ἐμείγην Φιλότητι, καὶ ἐυνῇ. The true ſenſe of which is expreſſed in the tranſlation. I cannot but take notice of a ſmall piece of prudery in Madam Dacier, who is exceeding careful of Helen's character. She turns this paſſage as if Paris had only her conſent to be her huſband, in this iſland. Pauſanias explains this line in another manner, and tells us, it was here that Paris had firſt the enjoyment of her, that in gratitude for his happineſs, he built a temple of Venus Migonites, the mingler or coupler, and that the neighbouring coaſt where it was erected, was called *Migonian* from μιγῆναι, *à miſcendo*. Pauſ. Laconicus.

While

While theſe to love's delicious rapture yield,
The ſtern Atrides rages round the field:
So ſome fell lion whom the woods obey,
Roars thro' the deſart, and demands his prey.
Paris he ſeeks, impatient to deſtroy,
But ſeeks in vain along the troops of Troy;
Ev'n thoſe had yielded to a foe ſo brave
The recreant warrior, hateful as the grave.
Then ſpeaking thus, the king of kings aroſe;
Ye Trojans, Dardans, all our gen'rous foes?
Hear and atteſt! from heav'n with conqueſt crown'd,
Our brother's arms the juſt ſucceſs have found:
Be therefore now the Spartan wealth reſtor'd,
Let Argive Helen own her lawful lord;
Th' appointed fine let Ilion juſtly pay,
And age to age record this ſignal day.
He ceas'd; his army's loud applauſes riſe,
And the long ſhout runs ecchoing thro' the ſkies,

THE ILIAD.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

The breach of the truce, and the firſt battle.

THE gods deliberate in council concerning the Trojan war: They agree upon the continuation of it, and Jupiter ſends down Minerva to break the truce. She perſuades Pandarus to aim an arrow at Menelaus, who is wounded, but cured by Machaon. In the mean time ſome of the Trojan troops attack the Greeks. Agamemnon is diſtinguiſhed in all the parts of a good general; he reviews the troops, and exhorts the leaders, ſome by praiſes, and others by reproofs. Neſtor is particularly celebrated for his military diſcipline. The battle joins, and great numbers are ſlain on both ſides.

The ſame day continues through this, as through the laſt book, (as it does alſo through the two following, and almoſt to the end of the ſeventh book.) The ſcene is wholly in the field before Troy.

AND now Olympus' ſhining gates unfold;
The Gods, with Jove, aſſume their thrones of gold:

Immortal

IT was from the beginning of this book that Virgil has taken that of his tenth Æneid, as the whole tenor of the ſtory in this and the

Immortal Hebe, freſh with bloom divine,
The golden goblet crowns with purple wine:
While the full bowls flow round, the pow'rs employ
Their careful eyes on long-contended Troy.
When Jove, diſpos'd to tempt Saturnia's ſpleen,
Thus wak'd the fury of his partial queen.
Two pow'rs divine the ſon of Atreus aid,
Imperial Juno, and the martial maid;
But high in heav'n they ſit, and gaze from far,
The tame ſpectator of his deeds of war.
Not thus fair Venus helps her favour'd knight,
The queen of pleaſures ſhares the toils of fight,

the laſt book is followed in his twelfth. The truce and the ſolemn oath, the breach of it by a dart thrown by Tolumnius, Juturna's inciting the Latines to renew the war, the wound of Æneas, his ſpeedy cure, and the battle enſuing; all theſe are manifeſtly copied from hence. The ſolemnity, ſurprize, and variety of theſe circumſtances ſeemed to him of importance enough, to build the whole cataſtrophe of his work upon them; though in Homer they are but openings to the general action, and ſuch as in their warmth are ſtill exceeded by all that follow them. They are choſen, we grant, by Virgil, with great judgment, and conclude his poem with a becoming majeſty: yet the finiſhing his ſcheme with that which is but the cooleſt part of Homer's action, tends in ſome degree to ſhew the diſparity of the poetical fire in theſe two authors.

Ver. 3. *Immortal Hebe.*] The Goddeſs of youth is introduced as an attendant upon the banquets of the Gods, to ſhew that the divine beings enjoy an eternal youth, and that their life is a felicity without end. Dacier.

Ver. 9. *Two pow'rs divine.*] Jupiter's reproaching theſe two Goddeſſes with neglecting to aſſiſt Menelaus, proceeds (as M. Dacier remarks) from the affection he bore to Troy: Since, if Menelaus by their help had gained a complete victory, the ſiege had been raiſed, and the city delivered. On the contrary, Juno and Minerva might ſuffer Paris to eſcape, as the method to continue the war to the total deſtruction of Troy. And accordingly a few lines after we find them complotting together, and contriving a new ſcene of miſeries to the Trojans.

Each

Each danger wards, and conſtant in her care
Saves in the moment of the laſt deſpair.
Her act has reſcu'd Paris' forfeit life,
Tho' great Atrides gain'd the glorious ſtrife,
Then ſay, ye pow'rs! what ſignal iſſue waits
To crown this deed, and finiſh all the fates?
Shall heav'n by peace the bleeding kingdom ſpare,
Or rouze the furies, and awake the war?
Yet, would the gods for human good provide,
Atrides ſoon might gain his beauteous bride,
Still Priam's walls in peaceful honours grow,
And thro' his gates the crouding nations flow,
Thus while he ſpoke, the queen of heav'n, enrage'd,
And queen of war, in cloſe conſult engage'd!
Apart they ſit, their deep deſigns employ,
And meditate the future woes of Troy.
Tho' ſecret anger ſwell'd Minerva's breaſt,
The prudent goddeſs yet her wrath ſuppreſt;
But Juno, impotent of paſſion, broke
Her ſullen ſilence, and with fury ſpoke.

Ver. 18. *Tho' great Atrides gain'd the glorious ſtrife.*] Jupiter here makes it a queſtion, Whether the foregoing combat ſhou'd determine the controverſy, or the peace be broken? His putting it thus, *that Paris is not killed, but Menelaus has the victory*, gives a hint for a diſpute, whether the conditions of the treaty were valid or annulled; that is to ſay, whether the controverſy was to be determined by the victory or by the death of one of the combatants. Accordingly it has been diſputed whether the articles were really binding to the Trojans or not?

Ver. 31. *Tho' ſecret anger ſwell'd Minerva's breaſt.*] Spondanus takes notice that Minerva, who in the firſt book had reſtrained the anger of Achilles, had now an opportunity of exerting the ſame conduct in reſpect to herſelf. We may bring the parallel cloſe, by obſerving that ſhe had before her in like manner a ſuperior, who had provoked her by ſharp expreſſions, and whoſe counſels ran againſt her ſentiments. In all which the poet takes care to preſerve her ſtill in the practice of that wiſdom of which ſhe was Goddeſs.

Shall

Shall then, O tyrant of th' ætherial reign!
My ſchemes, my labours, and my hopes be vain?
Have I for this, ſhook Ilion with alarms,
Aſſembled nations, ſet two worlds in arms?
To ſpread the war, I flew from ſhore to ſhore;
Th' immortal courſers ſcarce the labour bore.
At length ripe vengeance o'er their heads impends,
But Jove himſelf the faithleſs race defends:
Loth as thou art to puniſh lawleſs luſt,
Not all the Gods are partial and unjuſt.
The ſire whoſe thunder ſhakes the cloudy ſkies,
Sighs from his inmoſt ſoul, and thus replies;
Oh laſting rancour! oh inſatiate hate
To Phrygia's monarch, and the Phrygian ſtate!
What high offence has fir'd the wife of Jove,
Can wretched mortals harm the pow'rs above?
That Troy and Troy's whole race thou wou'dſt confound,
And yon' fair ſtructures level with the ground?
Haſte, leave the ſkies, fulfil thy ſtern deſire,
Burſt all her gates, and wrap her walls in fire!
Let Priam bleed! if yet thou thirſt for more,
Bleed all his ſons, and Ilion float with gore,
To boundleſs vengeance the wide realm be giv'n,
'Till vaſt deſtruction glut the queen of heav'n!

Ver. 55. *Let Priam bleed,* etc.] We find in Perſius's ſatires the name of Labeo, as an ill poet who made a miſerable tranſlation of the Iliad; one of whoſe verſes is ſtill preſerved, and happens to be that of this place.

Crudum manduces Priamum, Priamique piſinnos.

It may ſeem from this, that his tranſlation was ſervilely literal (as the old ſcholiaſt on Perſius obſerves.) And one cannot but take notice that Ogilby's and Hobbes's in this place are not unlike Labea's.

Both king and people thou would'ſt eat alive,
And eat up Priam and his children all.

So

So let it be, and Jove his peace enjoy,
When heav'n no longer hears the name of Troy.
But ſhould this arm prepare to wreak our hate
On thy lov'd realms, whoſe guilt demands their fate,
Preſume not thou the lifted bolt to ſtay,
Remember Troy, and give the vengeance way.
For know, of all the num'rous towns that riſe
Beneath the rolling ſun, and ſtarry ſkies,
Which gods have rais'd, or earth born men enjoy;
None ſtands ſo dear to Jove as ſacred Troy.
No mortals merit more diſtinguiſh'd grace
Than godlike Priam, or than Priam's race.
Still to our name their hecatombs expire,
And altars blaze with unextinguiſh'd fire.
At this the goddeſs roll'd her radiant eyes,
Then on the thund'rer fix'd them, and replies;
Three towns are Juno's on the Grecian plains,
More dear than all th' extended earth contains,
Mycenæ, Argos, and the Spartan wall;
Theſe thou may'ſt raze, nor I forbid their fall:
'Tis not in me the vengeance to remove;
The crime's ſufficient that they ſhare my love.
Of pow'r ſuperior why ſhould I complain?
Reſent I may, but muſt reſent in vain.

Ver. 61. *But ſhould this arm prepare to wreak our hate*
On thy lov'd realms———]

Homer in this place has made Jupiter to prophecy the deſtruction of Mycenæ the favoured city of Juno, which happened a little before the time of our author. Strab. l. viii. "The Trojan war "being over, and the kingdom of Agamemnon deſtroyed, Mycenæ "daily decreaſed after the return of the Heraclidæ: For theſe be- "coming maſters of Peloponneſus, caſt out the old inhabitants; "ſo that they who poſſeſſed Argos overcame Mycenæ alſo, and "contracted both into one body. A ſhort time after, Mycenæ "was deſtroyed by the Argives, and not the leaſt remains of it are "now to be found."

Yet

Yet ſome diſtinction Juno might require,
Sprung with thyſelf from one celeſtial ſire,
A goddeſs born to ſhare the realms above,
And ſtyl'd the conſort of the thund'ring Jove;
Nor thou a wife and ſiſter's right deny;
Let both conſent, and both by turns comply;
So ſhall the Gods our joint decrees obey,
And heaven ſhall act as we direct the way.
See ready Pallas waits thy high commands,
To raiſe in arms the Greek and Phrygian bands:
There ſudden friendſhip by her arts may ceaſe,
And the proud Trojans firſt infringe the peace.
The ſire of men, and monarch of the ſky,
Th' advice approv'd, and bade Minerva fly,
Diſſolve the league, and all her arts employ
To make the breach the faithleſs act of Troy,
Fir'd with the charge, ſhe headlong urge'd her flight,
And ſhot like light'ning from Olympus' height.

Ver. 96. *Th' advice approv'd.*] This is one of the places for which Homer is blamed by Plato, who introduces Socrates reprehending it in his dialogue of the republic. And indeed, if it were granted that the Trojans had no right to break this treaty, the preſent machine where Juno is made to propoſe perjury, Jupiter to allow it, and Minerva to be commiſſioned to haſten the execution of it, would be one of the hardeſt to be reconciled to reaſon in the whole poem. Unleſs even then one might imagine, that Homer's heaven is ſometimes no more than an ideal world of abſtracted beings; and ſo every motion which riſes in the mind of man is attributed to the quality to which it belongs, with the name of the Deity who is ſuppoſed to preſide over that quality ſuperadded to it; in this ſenſe the preſent allegory is eaſy enough. Pandarus thinks it prudent to gain honour and wealth at the hands of the Trojans by deſtroying Menelaus. This ſentiment is alſo incited by a notion of glory, of which Juno is repreſented as Goddeſs. Jupiter, who is ſuppoſed to know the thoughts of men, permits the action which he is not the author of; but ſends a prodigy at the ſame time to give warning of a coming miſchief, and accordingly we find both armies deſcanting upon the ſight of it in the following lines.

As the red comet, from Saturnius ſent
To fright the nations with a dire portent,
(A fatal ſign to armies on the plain,
Or trembling ſailors on the wintry main)
With ſweeping glories glides along in air,
And ſhakes the ſparkles from its blazing hair:
Between both armies thus, in open ſight,
Shot the bright goddeſs in a trail of light.
With eyes erect the gazing hoſts admire
The pow'r deſcending, and the heav'ns on fire!
The gods, (they cry'd) the gods their ſignal ſent,
And fate now labours with ſome vaſt event:
Jove ſeals the league, or bloodier ſcenes prepares;
Jove, the great arbiter of peace and wars!

They ſaid, while Pallas thro' the Trojan throng
(In ſhape a mortal) paſs'd diſguiſ'd along.
Like bold Laodocus, her courſe ſhe bent,
Who from Antenor trace'd his high deſcent.
Amidſt the ranks Lycaon's ſon ſhe found,
The warlike Pandarus, for ſtrength renown'd;
Whoſe

Ver. 120. *Pandarus for ſtrength renown'd.*] Homer, ſays Plutarch in his treatiſe of the Pythian Oracle, makes not the Gods to uſe all perſons indifferently as their ſecond agents, but each according to the powers he is endued with by art or nature. For a proof of this, he puts us in mind how Minerva, when ſhe would perſuade the Grecks, ſeeks for Ulyſſes; when ſhe would break the truce, for Pandarus; and when ſhe would conquer, for Diomede. If we conſult the Scholia upon this inſtance, they give ſeveral reaſons why Pandarus was particularly proper for the occaſion. The Goddeſs went not to the Trojans, becauſe they hated Paris, and (as we are told in the end of the foregoing book) would rather have given him up, than have done an ill action for him: She therefore looks among the allies, and finds Pandarus who was of a nation noted for perfidiouſneſs, and had a ſoul avaricious enough to be capable of engaging in this treachery for the hopes of a reward from Paris: as appears

Whoſe ſquadrons, led from black Æſepus' flood,
With flaming ſhields in martial circle ſtood.
To him the goddeſs: Phrygian! can'ſt thou hear
A well tim'd-counſel with a willing ear?
What praiſe were thine, could'ſt thou direct thy dart,
Amid'ſt his triumph, to the Spartan's heart?
What gift's from Troy, from Paris would'ſt thou gain
Thy country's foe, the Grecian glory ſlain?
Then ſeize th' occaſion, dare the mighty deed,
Aim at his breaſt, and may that aim ſucceed!
But firſt, to ſpeed the ſhaft, addreſs thy vow
To Lycian Phœbus with the ſilver bow,
And ſwear the firſtlings of thy flock to pay
On Zelia's altars, to the God of day.
He heard, and madly at the motion pleas'd,
His poliſh'd bow with haſty raſhneſs ſeiz'd.
'Twas form'd of horn, and ſmooth'd with artful toil:
A mountain-goat reſign'd the ſhining ſpoil,
Who pierce'd long ſince beneath his arrows bled;
The ſtately quarry on the cliffs lay dead,
And ſixteen palms his brows large honours ſpread:
The workman join'd, and ſhap'd the bended horns,
And beaten gold each taper point adorns.
This, by the Greeks unſeen, the warrior bends,
Screen'd by the ſhields of his ſurrounding friends.
There

appears by his being ſo covetous as not to bring horſes to the ſiege for fear of the expence or loſs of them; as he tells Æneas in the fifth book.

Ver. 141. *Sixteen palms.*] Both the horns together made this length; and not each, as Madam Dacier renders it. I do not object it as an improbability, that the horns were of ſixteen palms each; but that this would be an extravagant and unmanageable ſize for a bow is evident.

Ver. 144. *This, by the Greek: unſeen, the warrior bends.*] The poet having held us through the foregoing book, in expectation of a peace, makes the conditions be here broken after ſuch a manner,

There meditates the mark; and couching low,
Fits the ſharp arrow to the well-ſtrung bow.
One from a hundred feather'd deaths he choſe,
Fated to wound, and cauſe of future woes.
Then offers vows with hecatombs to crown
Apollo's altars in his native town.
Now with full force the yielding horn he bends,
Drawn to an arch, and joins the doubling ends;
Cloſe to his breaſt he ſtrains the nerve below,
'Till the barb'd point approach the circling bow;
Th' impatient weapon whizzes on the wing;
Sounds the tough horn, and twangs the quiv'ring ſtring:
But thee, Atrides! in that dang'rous hour
The gods forget not, nor thy guardian pow'r:
Pallas aſſiſts, and (weaken'd in its force)
Diverts the weapon from its deſtin'd courſe:
So from her babe, when ſlumber ſeals his eye,
The watchful mother wafts th' envenom'd fly.
Juſt

as ſhould oblige the Greeks to act through the war with that irreconcilable fury, which affords him the opportunity of exerting the full fire of his own genius. The ſhot of Pandarus being therefore of ſuch conſequence, it was thought fit not to paſs it over in a few words, like the flight of every common arrow, but to give it a deſcription ſome way correſponding to its importance. For this, he ſurrounds it with a train of circumſtances; the hiſtory of the bow, the bending it, the covering Pandarus with ſhields, the choice of the arrow, the prayer, and poſture of the ſhooter, the ſound of the ſtring, and flight of the ſhaft; all moſt beautifully and livelily painted.

Ver. 160. *Pallas aſſiſts, and (weaken'd in its force) diverts the weapon.*——] For ſhe only deſigned, by all this action, to increaſe the glory of the Greeks in the taking of Troy: Yet ſome commentators have been ſo ſtupid, as to wonder that Pallas ſhould be employed firſt in the wounding of Menelaus, and after in the protecting him.

Ver. 163. *Wafts th' envenom'd fly.*] This is one of thoſe humble compariſons which Homer ſometimes uſes to diverſify his ſubject,

but

Juſt where his belt with golden buckles join'd,
Where linen folds the double corſlet lin'd,
She turn'd the ſhaft, which hiſſing from above,
Paſs'd the broad belt, and thro' the corſlet drove;
The folds it pierce'd, the plaited linen tore,
And raz'd the ſkin, and drew the purple gore.
As when ſome ſtately trappings are decreed
To grace a monarch on his bounding ſteed,
A nymph in Caria or Mæonia bred,
Stains the pure iv'ry with a lively red;
With equal luſtre various colours vie.
The ſhining whiteneſs, and the Tyrian dye;
So, great Atrides! ſhow'd thy ſacred blood,
As down thy ſnowy thigh diſtill'd the ſtreaming flood.
With horror ſeiz'd, the king of men deſcry'd
The ſhaft infix'd, and ſaw the guſhing tide:
Nor leſs the Spartan fear'd, before he found
The ſhining barb appear above the wound.
Then, with a ſigh, that heav'd his manly breaſt,
The royal brother thus his grief expreſt,
And graſp'd his hand; while all the Greeks around
With anſwering ſighs return'd the plaintive ſound.
O dear as life! did I for this agree
The ſolemn truce, a fatal truce to thee!

Were

but a very exact one in its kind, and correſponding in all its parts. The care of the Goddeſs, the unſuſpecting ſecurity of Menelaus, the eaſe with which ſhe diverts the danger, and the danger itſelf, are all included in this ſhort compaſs.

Ver. 177. *As down thy ſnowy thigh.*] Homer is very particular here, in giving the picture of the blood running in a long trace, lower and lower.

Ver. 186. *O dear as life*, etc.] This incident of the wound of Menelaus gives occaſion to Homer to draw a fine deſcription of fraternal love in Agamemnon. On the firſt ſight of it, he is ſtruck with amaze and confuſion, and now breaks out in tenderneſs and grief. He firſt accuſes himſelf as the cauſe of this misfortune, by having

Wert thou expos'd to all the hoſtile train,
To fight for Greece, and conquer, to be ſlain?
The race of Trojans in thy ruin join,
And faith is ſcorn'd by all the perjur'd line.
Not thus our vows, confirm'd with wine and gore,
Thoſe hands we plighted, and thoſe oaths we ſwore,
Shall all be vain: When heav'n's revenge is ſlow,
Jove but prepares to ſtrike the fiercer blow.
The day ſhall come, that great avenging day,
Which Troy's proud glories in the duſt ſhall lay,
When Priam's pow'rs and Priam's ſelf ſhall fall,
And one prodigious ruin ſwallow all.
I ſee the God, already from the pole,
Bare his red arm, and bid the thunder roll;
I ſee th' Eternal all his fury ſhed,
And ſhake his Ægis o'er their guilty head.
Such mighty woes on perjur'd princes wait;
But thou, alas! deſerv'ſt a happier fate.
Still muſt I mourn the period of thy days,
And only mourn, without my ſhare of praiſe?
Depriv'd of thee, the heartleſs Greeks no more
Shall dream of conqueſts on the hoſtile ſhore;
Troy ſeiz'd of Helen, and our glory loſt,
Thy bones ſhall moulder on a foreign coaſt;
While ſome proud Trojan thus inſulting cries,
(And ſpurns the duſt where Menelaus lies)

Such

having conſented to expoſe his brother to the ſingle combat, which had drawn on this fatal conſequence. Next he inveighs againſt the Trojans in general for their perfidiouſneſs, as not yet knowing that it was the act of Pandarus only. He then comforts himſelf with the confidence, that the Gods will revenge him upon Troy; but doubts by what hands this puniſhment may be inflicted, as fearing the death of Menelaus will force the Greeks to return with ſhame to their country.

Ver. 212. *While ſome proud Trojan*, etc.] Agamemnon here calls to mind how, upon the death of his brother, the ineffectual prepa-

rations

" Such are the trophies Greece from Ilion brings,
" And ſuch the conqueſt of her king of kings!
" Lo his proud veſſels ſcatter'd o'er the main,
" And unrevenge'd, his mighty brother ſlain."
Oh! ere that dire diſgrace ſhall blaſt my fame,
Oe'rwhelm me, earth! and hide a monarch's ſhame.
He ſaid: A leader's and a brother's fears
Poſſeſs his ſoul, which thus the Spartan chears:
Let not thy words the warmth of Greece abate:
The feeble dart is guiltleſs of my fate:
Stiff with the rich embroider'd work around,
My vary'd belt repell'd the flying wound.
To whom the king. My brother and my friend,
Thus, always thus, may heav'n thy life defend!
Now ſeek ſome ſkilful hand, whoſe pow'rful art
May ſtanch th' effuſion, and extract the dart.
Herald, be ſwift, and bid Machaon bring
His ſpeedy ſuccour to the Spartan king;

rations and actions againſt Troy muſt become a deriſion to the world. This is in its own nature a very irritating ſentiment, tho' it were never ſo careleſsly expreſt; but the poet has found out a peculiar air of aggravation, in making him bring all the conſequences before his eyes, in a picture of their Trojan enemies gathering round the tomb of the unhappy Menelaus, elated with pride, inſulting the dead, and throwing out diſdainful expreſſions and curſes againſt him and his family. There is nothing which could more effectually repreſent a ſtate of anguiſh, than the drawing ſuch an image as this, which ſhews a man increaſing his preſent unhappineſs by the proſpect of a future train of misfortunes.

Ver. 222. *Let not thy words the warmth of Greece abate.*] In Agamemnon, Homer has ſhewn an example of a tender nature, and fraternal affection, and now in Menelaus he gives us one of a generous warlike patience and preſence of mind. He ſpeaks of his own caſe with no other regard, but as this accident of his wound may tend to the diſcouragement of the ſoldiers; and exhorts the general to beware of dejecting their ſpirits from the proſecution of the war.

Pierce'd

Pierce'd with a winged ſhaft (the deed of Troy)
The Grecian's ſorrow, and the Dardan's joy.
With haſty zeal the ſwift Talthybius flies;
Thro' the thick files he darts his ſearching eyes,
And finds Machaon, where ſublime he ſtands
In arms incircled with his native bands.
Then thus: Machaon, to the king repair.
His wounded brother claims thy timely care;
Pierce'd by ſome Lycian or Dardanian bow,
A grief to us, a triumph to the foe.
The heavy tidings griev'd the godlike man;
Swift to his ſuccour thro' the ranks he ran:
The dauntleſs king yet ſtanding firm he found,
And all the chiefs in deep concern around.
Where to the ſteely point the reed was join'd,
The ſhaft he drew, but left the head behind.
Strait the broad belt with gay embroid'ry grace'd,
He loos'd; the corſlet from his breaſt unbrace'd;
Then ſuck'd the blood, and ſov'reign balm infus'd,
Which Chiron gave, and Æſculapius us'd.
While round the prince the Greeks employ their care,
The Trojans ruſh tumultuous to the war;
Once more they glitter in refulgent arms,
Once more the fields are fill'd with dire alarms.
Nor had you ſeen the king of men appear
Confus'd, unactive, or ſurpriz'd with fear;

Ver. 253. *The Trojans ruſh tumultuous to the war.*] They advanced to the enemy in the belief, that the ſhot of Pandarus was made by order of the generals. Dacier.

256. *Nor had you ſeen.*] The poet here changes his narration, and turns himſelf to the reader in an apoſtrophe. Longinus in his 22d chapter, commends this figure, as cauſing a reader to become a ſpectator, and keeping his mind fixed upon the action before him. The apoſtrophe (ſays he) renders us more awakened, more attentive, and more full of the thing deſcribed. Madam Dacier will have it, that it is the muſe who addreſſes herſelf to the poet in the ſecond perſon: it is no great matter which, ſince it has equally its *effect either way.*

On

But fond of glory, with ſevere delight,
His beating boſom claim'd the riſing fight.
No longer with his warlike ſteeds he ſtay'd,
Or preſs'd the car with poliſh'd braſs inlay'd:
But left Eurymedon the reins to guide;
The fiery courſers ſnorted at his ſide.
On foot thro' all the martial ranks he moves,

And

Ver. 264. *Thro' all the martial ranks he moves*, etc.] In the following review of the army, which takes up a great part of this book, we ſee all the ſpirit, art, and induſtry of a compleat general; together with the proper characters of thoſe leaders whom he incites. Agamemnon conſiders at this ſudden exigence, that he ſhould firſt addreſs himſelf to all in general; he divides his diſcourſe to the brave and the fearful, uſing arguments which ariſe from confidence or deſpair, paſſions which act upon us moſt forcibly: To the brave, he urges their ſecure hopes of conqueſt, ſince the Gods muſt puniſh perjury; to the timorous, their inevitable deſtruction, if the enemy ſhould burn their ſhips. After this he flies from rank to rank, applying himſelf to each ally with particular artifice: He careſſes Idomeneus as an old friend, who had promiſed not to forſake him; and meets with an anſwer in that hero's true character, ſhort, honeſt, hearty, and ſoldier like. He praiſes the Ajaxes as warriors, whoſe examples fired the army; and is received by them without any reply, as they were men who did not profeſs ſpeaking. He paſſes next to Neſtor, whom he finds talking to his ſoldiers as he marſhalled them; here he was not to part without a compliment on both ſides; he wiſhes him the ſtrength he had once in his youth, and is anſwered with an account of ſomething which the old hero had done in his former days. From hence he goes to the troops which lay fartheſt from the place of action; where he finds Meneſtheus and Ulyſſes, not entirely unprepared, nor yet in motion, as being ignorant of what had happened. He reproves Ulyſſes for this, with words agreeable to the hurry he is in, and receives an anſwer which ſuits not ill with the twofold character of a wiſe and a valiant man: hereupon Agamemnon appears preſent to himſelf, and excuſes his haſty expreſſions. The next he meets is Diomede, whom he alſo rebukes for backwardneſs, but after another manner, by ſetting before him the example of his father. Thus is Agamemnon introduced, praiſing, terrifying, exhorting, blaming, excuſing himſelf, and again relapſing into reproofs; a lively pic-

ture

And theſe encourages, and thoſe reproves.
Brave men! he cries (to ſuch who boldly dare
Urge their ſwift ſteeds to face the coming war):
Your ancient valour on the foes approve;
Jove is with Greece, and let us truſt in Jove.
'Tis not for us, but guilty Troy to dread,
Whoſe crimes ſit heavy on her perjur'd head:
Her ſons and matrons Greece ſhall lead in chains,
And her dead warriors ſtrow the mournful plains.
Thus with new ardor he the brave inſpires;
Or thus the fearful with reproaches fires.
Shame to your country, ſcandal of your kind!
Born to the fate you well deſerve to find!
Why ſtand ye gazing round the dreadful plain,
Prepar'd for flight, but doom'd to fly in vain?
Confus'd, and panting thus, the hunted deer
Falls as he flies, a victim to his fear.
Still muſt ye wait the foes, and ſtill retire,
'Till yon tall veſſels blaze with Trojan fire?
Or truſt ye, Jove a valiant foe ſhall chace,
To ſave a trembling, heartleſs, daſtard race?
This ſaid, he ſtalked with ample ſtrides along,
To Crete's brave monarch, and his martial throng:
High at their head he ſaw the chief appear,
And bold Meriones excite the rear.
At this the king his gen'rous joy expreſt,
And claſp'd the warrior to his armed breaſt.
Divine Idomeneus! what thanks we owe
To worth like thine? what praiſe ſhall we beſtow?
To thee the foremoſt honours are decreed,
Firſt in the fight, and ev'ry graceful deed.

ture of a great mind in the higheſt emotion. And at the ſame time the variety is ſo kept up, with a regard to the different characters of the leaders, that our thoughts are not tired with running along with him over all his army.

For

For this, in banquets, when the gen'rous bowls
Reſtore our blood, and raiſe the warrior's ſouls,
Thro' all the reſt with ſtated rules we bound,
Unmix'd, unmeaſur'd are thy goblets crown'd.
Be ſtill thyſelf; in arms a mighty name;
Maintain thy honours, and inlarge thy fame.
To whom the Cretan thus his ſpeech addreſt;
Secure of me, O king! exhort the reſt:
Fix'd to thy ſide, in ev'ry toil I ſhare.
Thy firm aſſociate in the day of war.
But let the ſignal be this moment giv'n;
To mix in fight is all I aſk of heav'n.
The field ſhall prove how perjuries ſucceed,
And chains or death avenge their impious deed.
Charm'd with his heat, the king his courſe purſues,
And next the troops of either Ajax views:
In one firm orb the bands were range'd around,
A cloud of heroes blacken'd all the ground.
Thus from the lofty promontory's brow
A ſwain ſurveys the gath'ring ſtorm below;
Slow from the main, the heavy vapours riſe,
Spread in dim ſtreams, and ſail along the ſkies,
'Till black as night the ſwelling tempeſt ſhows,
The cloud condenſing as the weſt-wind blows:
He dreads th'impending ſtorm, and drives his flock
To the cloſe covert of an arching rock.

Ver. 296. *For this, in banquets.*] The ancients uſually in their feaſts divided to the gueſts by equal portions, except when they took ſome particular occaſion to ſhew diſtinction, and give the preference to any one perſon. It was then looked upon as the higheſt mark of honour to be allotted the beſt portion of meat and wine, and to be allowed an exemption from the laws of the feaſt, in drinking wine unmingled and without ſtint. This cuſtom was much more ancient than the time of the Trojan war, and we find it practiſed in the banquet given by Joſeph to his brethren in Egypt, Gen. xliii. ver. ult. *And he ſent meſſes to them from before him, but Benjamin's meſs was five times ſo much as any of theirs.*

Such,

Such, and ſo thick, th' embattled ſquadrons ſtood,
With ſpears erect, a moving iron wood;
A ſhady light was ſhot from glitt'ring ſhields,
And their brown arms obſcur'd the duſky fields.
O heroes! worthy ſuch a dauntleſs train,
Whoſe godlike virtue we but urge in vain,
(Exclaim'd the king) who raiſe your eager bands
With great examples, more than loud commands.
Ah would the gods but breathe in all the reſt
Such ſouls as burn in your exalted breaſt!
Soon ſhould our arms with juſt ſucceſs be crown'd,
And Troy's proud walls lie ſmoaking on the ground.
Then to the next the gen'ral bends his courſe;
(His heart exults, and glories in his force)
There rev'rend Neſtor ranks his Pylian bands,
And with inſpiring eloquence commands;
With ſtricteſt orders ſets his train in arms,
The chiefs adviſes, and the ſoldiers warms.

Ver. 336. *There rev'rend Neſtor ranks his Pylian bands.*] This is the prince whom Homer chiefly celebrates for martial diſcipline; of the reſt he is content to ſay they were valiant, and ready to fight: the years, long obſervation and experience of Neſtor, rendered him the fitteſt perſon to be diſtinguiſhed on this account. The diſpoſition of his troops in this place (together with what he is made to ſay, that their forefathers uſed the ſame method) may be a proof that the art of war was well known in Greece before the time of Homer. Nor indeed can it be imagined otherwiſe, in an age when all the world made their acquiſitions by force of arms only. What is moſt to be wondered at, is, that they had not the uſe of cavalry, all men engaging either on foot, or from chariots, (a particular neceſſary to be known by every reader of Homer's battles.) In theſe chariots there were always two perſons, one of whom only fought, the other was wholly employed in managing the horſes. Madam Dacier, in her excellent preface to Homer, is of opinion, that there were no horſemen till near the time of Saul, threeſcore years after the ſiege of Troy; ſo that although cavalry were in uſe in Homer's days, yet he thought himſelf obliged to regard the cuſtoms of the age of which he writ, rather than thoſe of his own.

Alaſtor,

Alaſtor, Chromius, Hæmon round him wait,
Bias the good, and Pelagon the great,
The horſe and chariots to the front aſſign'd,
The foot (the ſtrength of war) he range'd behind;
The middle ſpace ſuſpected troops ſupply,
Inclos'd by both, nor left the pow'r to fly:
He gives command to curb the fiery ſteed,
Nor cauſe confuſion, nor the ranks exceed;
Before the reſt let none too raſhly ride;
No ſtrength nor ſkill, but juſt in time, be try'd:
The charge once made, no warrior turn the rein,
But fight, or fall; a firm, embody'd train.
He whom the fortune of the field ſhall caſt
From forth his chariot, mount the next in haſte;
Nor ſeek unpractis'd to direct the car,
Content with jav'lins to provoke the war.
Our great forefathers held this prudent courſe,
Thus rul'd their ardour, thus preſerv'd their force,
By laws like theſe immortal conqueſts made,
And earth's proud tyrants low in aſhes laid.
So ſpoke the maſter of the martial art,
And touch'd with tranſport great Atrides' heart.
Oh! hadſt thou ſtrength to match thy brave deſires,
And nerves to ſecond what thy ſoul inſpires!
But waſting years that wither human race,
Exhauſt thy ſpirits, and thy arms unbrace.
What once thou wert, oh ever mightſt thou be!
And age the lot of any chief but thee.

Ver. 344. *The middle ſpace ſuſpected troops ſupply.*] This artifice of placing thoſe men whoſe behaviour was moſt to be doubted, in the middle (ſo as to put them under a neceſſity of engaging even againſt their inclinations) was followed by Hannibal in the battle of Zama; as is obſerved and praiſed by Polibius, who quotes this verſe on that occaſion, in acknowledgment of Homer's ſkill in military diſcipline. That our author was the firſt maſter of that art in Greece, is the opinion of Ælian.

Thus to th' experience'd prince Atrides cry'd;
He ſhook his hoary locks, and thus reply'd.
Well might I wiſh, could mortal wiſh renew
That ſtrength which once in boiling youth I knew;
Such as I was, when Erenthalion ſlain
Beneath this arm fell proſtrate on the plain.
But Heav'n its gifts not all at once beſtows,
Theſe years with wiſdom crowns, with actions thoſe:
The field of combat fits the young and bold,
The ſolemn council beſt becomes the old:
To you the glorious conflict I reſign,
Let ſage advice, the palm of age, be mine.
He ſaid. With joy the monarch march'd before,
And found Meneſtheus on the duſty ſhore,
With whom the firm Athenian phalanx ſtands;
And next Ulyſſes with his ſubject bands.
Remote their forces lay, nor knew ſo far
The peace infringe'd, nor heard the ſounds of war;
The tumult late begun, they ſtood intent
To watch the motion, dubious of th' event.
The king, who ſaw their ſquadrons yet unmov'd,
With haſty ardour thus the chiefs reprov'd.
Can Peteus' ſon forget a warrior's part,
And fears Ulyſſes, ſkill'd in ev'ry art?
Why ſtand you diſtant, and the reſt expect
To mix in combat which yourſelves neglect?
From you 'twas hop'd among the firſt to dare
The ſhock of armies, and commence the war.

Ver. 384. *Remote their forces lay.*] This is a reaſon why the troops of Ulyſſes and Meneſtheus were not yet in motion. Though another may be added in reſpect to the former, that it did not conſiſt with the wiſdom of Ulyſſes to fall on with his forces until he was well aſſured. Though courage be no inconſiderable part of his character, yet it is always joined with great caution. Thus we ſee him ſoon after in the very heat of battle, when his friend was juſt ſlain before his eyes, firſt looking carefully about him, before he would throw his ſpear to revenge him.

For

For this your names are call'd, before the reſt,
To ſhare the pleaſures of the genial feaſt;
And can you, chiefs! without a bluſh ſurvey
Whole troops before you lab'ring in the fray?
Say, is it thus thoſe honours you requite?
The firſt in banquets, but the laſt in fight.
Ulyſſes heard: the hero's warmth o'erſpread
His cheek with bluſhes: and ſevere, he ſaid:
Take back th' unjuſt reproach! Behold we ſtand
Sheath'd in bright arms, and but expect command,
If glorious deeds afford thy ſoul delight,
Behold me plunging in the thickeſt fight.
Then give thy warrior-chief a warrior's due,
Who dares to act whate'er thou dar'ſt to view.
Struck with his gen'rous wrath, the King replies;
Oh great in action, and in counſel wiſe!
With ours, thy care and ardour are the ſame,
Nor need I to command, nor ought to blame.
Sage as thou art, and learn'd in human kind,
Forgive the tranſport of a martial mind.
Haſte to the fight, ſecure of juſt amends;
The Gods that make, ſhall keep the worthy, friends.
He ſaid, and paſs'd where great Tydides lay,
His ſteeds and chariots wedge'd in firm array:
(The warlike Sthenelus attends his ſide)
To whom with ſtern reproach the monarch cry'd;
Oh ſon of Tydeus! (he, whoſe ſtrength could tame
The bounding ſteed, in arms a mighty name)
Canſt thou, remote, the mingling hoſts deſcry,
With hands unactive, and a careleſs eye?
Not thus thy ſire the fierce encounter fear'd;
Still firſt in front the matchleſs prince appear'd:
What glorious toils, what wonders they recite,
Who view'd him lab'ring thro' the ranks of fight!

I ſaw him once, when gath'ring martial pow'rs
A peaceful gueſt, he fought Mycenæ's tow'rs;
Armies he aſk'd, and armies had been giv'n,
Not we deny'd, but Jove forbad from heav'n;
While dreadful comets glaring from afar,
Forewarn'd the horrors of the Theban war.
Next, ſent by Greece from where Aſopus flows,
A fearleſs envoy, he approach'd the foes;
Thebe's hoſtile walls, unguarded and alone,
Dauntleſs he enters, and demands the throne.
The tyrant feaſting with his chiefs he found,
And dar'd to combate all thoſe chiefs around;
Dar'd and ſubdu'd, before their haughty lord;
For Pallas ſtrung his arm, and edge'd his ſword.
Stung with the ſhame, within the winding way,
To bar his paſſage fifty warriors lay;
Two heroes led the ſecret ſquadron on,
Mœon the fierce, and hardy Lycophon;
Thoſe fifty ſlaughter'd in the gloomy vale,
He ſpar'd but one to bear the dreadful tale.
Such Tydeus was, and ſuch his martial fire;
Gods! how the ſon degen'rates from the ſire?
No words the Godlike Diomede return'd,
But heard reſpectful, and in ſecret burn'd:

Not

Ver. 430. *I ſaw him once, etc.*] This long narration concerning the hiſtory of Tydeus, is not of the nature of thoſe for which Homer has been blamed with ſome colour of juſtice: It is not a cold ſtory, but a warm reproof, while the particularising the actions of the father is made the higheſt incentive to the ſon. Accordingly the air of this ſpeech ought to be inſpirited above the common narrative ſtyle. As for the ſtory itſelf, it is finely told by Statius in the ſecond book of the Thebais.

Ver. 452. *No words the Godlike Diomede return'd.*] "When Di-
"omede is reproved by Agamemnon, he holds his peace in reſpect
"to his general; but Sthenelus retorts upon him with boaſting
"and inſolence. It is here worth obſerving in what manner Aga-
"memnon

Not ſo fierce Capaneus' undaunted ſon,
Stern as his ſire, the boaſter thus begun.
What needs, O monarch! this invidious praiſe,
Ourſelves to leſſen, while our ſires you raiſe?
Dare to be juſt, Atrides! and confeſs
Our valour equal, tho' our fury leſs.
With fewer troops we ſtorm'd the Theban wall,
And happier ſaw the ſev'nfold city fall.
In impious acts the guilty fathers dy'd;
The ſons ſubdu'd, for Heav'n was on their ſide.
Far more than heirs of all our parents fame,
Our glories darken their diminiſh'd name.
To him Tydides thus. My friend forbear,
Suppreſs thy paſſion, and the king revere:
His high concern may well excuſe this rage,
Whoſe cauſe we follow, and whoſe war we wage;

" memnon behaves himſelf: he paſſes by Sthenelus without af-
" fording any reply; whereas juſt before, when Ulyſſes teſtified his
" reſentment, he immediately returned him an anſwer. For as it
" is a mean and ſervile thing, and unbecoming the majeſty of a
" prince, to make apologies to every man in juſtification of what
" he has ſaid or done; ſo to treat all men with equal neglect is
" mere pride and exceſs of folly. We alſo ſee of Diomede, that
" though he refrains from ſpeaking in this place, when the time
" demanded action; he afterwards expreſſes himſelf in ſuch a man-
" ner, as ſhews him not to have been inſenſible of this unjuſt re-
" buke (in the ninth book) when he tells the king, he was the
" firſt who had dared to reproach him with want of courage."
Plutarch of reading the Poets.

Ver. 460. *We ſtorm'd the Theban wall.*] The firſt Theban war, of which Agamemnon ſpoke in the preceding lines, was ſeven and twenty years before the war of Troy. Sthenelus here ſpeaks of the ſecond Theban war, which happened ten years after the firſt: when the ſons of the ſeven captains conquered the city, before which their fathers were deſtroyed. Tydeus expired gnawing the head of his enemy, and Capaneus was thunder-ſtruck while he blaſphemed Jupiter.

His the firſt praiſe, were Ilion's tow'rs o'erthrown,
And, if we fail, the chief diſgrace his own.
Let him the Greeks to hardy toils excite,
'Tis ours to labour in the glorious fight.
He ſpoke, and ardent, on the trembling ground
Sprung from his car; his ringing arms reſound.
Dire was the clang, and dreadful from afar,
Of arm'd Tydides ruſhing to the war.
As when the winds, aſcending by degrees,
Firſt move the whitening ſurface of the ſeas,
The billows float in order to the ſhore,
The wave behind rolls on the wave before;
Till, with the growing ſtorm, the deeps ariſe,
Foam o'er the rocks, and thunder to the ſkies.
So to the fight the thick battalions throng,
Shields urge'd on ſhields, and men drove men along.
Sedate and ſilent move the num'rous bands;
No ſound, no whiſper but the chief's commands,
Thoſe only heard; with awe the reſt obey,
As if ſome God had ſnatch'd their voice away.
Not ſo the Trojans; from their hoſt aſcends
A gen'ral ſhout that all the region rends.
As when the fleecy flocks unnumber'd ſtand
In wealthy ſolds, and wait the milker's hand,

Ver. 478. *As when the winds*, etc.] This is the firſt battle in Homer; and it is worthy obſervation with what grandeur it is deſcribed, and raiſed by one circumſtance above another, until all is involved in horror and tumult: the foregoing ſimile of the winds, riſing by degrees into a general tempeſt, is an image of the progreſs of his own ſpirit in this deſcription. We ſee firſt an innumerable army moving in order, and are amuſed with the pomp and ſilence; then wakened with the noiſe and clamour; next they join, the adverſe Gods are let down among them; the imaginary perſons of Terror, Flight, Diſcord, ſucceed to re-inforce them; then all is undiſtinguiſhed fury, and a confuſion of horrors, only that at different openings we behold the diſtinct deaths of ſeveral heroes, and then are involved again in the ſame confuſion.

The

The hollow vales inceſſant bleating fills,
The lambs reply from all the neigh'bring hills:
Such clamours roſe from various nations round,
Mix'd was the murmur, and confus'd the ſound.
Each hoſt now joins, and each a God inſpires,
Theſe Mars incites, and thoſe Minerva fires.
Pale Flight around, and dreadful Terror reign;
And Diſcord raging bathes the purple plain:
Diſcord! dire ſiſter of the ſlaught'ring pow'r,
Small at her birth, but riſing ev'ry hour,
While ſcarce the ſkies her horrid head can bound,
She ſtalks on earth, and ſhakes the world around;
The nations bleed, where'er her ſteps ſhe turns,
The groan ſtill deepens, and the combat burns.
Now ſhield with ſhield, with helmet helmet cleſ'd,
To armour armour, lance to lance oppos'd,
Hoſt againſt hoſt with ſhadowy ſquadrons drew,
The ſounding darts in iron-tempeſts flew,
Victors and vanquiſh'd join promiſcuous cries,
And ſhrilling ſhouts and dying groans ariſe;
With ſtreaming blood the ſlipp'ry fields are dy'd,
And ſlaughter'd heroes ſwell the dreadful tide.
As torrents roll, increas'd by num'rous rills,
With rage impetuous down their echoing hills;

Ruſh

Ver. 502. *Diſcord, dire ſiſter*, etc.] This is the paſſage ſo highly extolled by Longinus, as one of the moſt ſignal inſtances of the noble ſublimity of this author: where it is ſaid, that the image here drawn of Diſcord, *whoſe head touched the heavens, and whoſe feet were on earth*, may as juſtly be applied to the vaſt reach and elevation of the genius of Homer.

Ver. 508. *Now ſhield with ſhield*, etc.] The verſes which follow in the original are perhaps excelled by none in Homer; and that he had himſelf a particular fondneſs for them, may be imagined from his inſerting them again in the ſame words in the eighth book.

Ver. 516. *As torrents roll.*] This compariſon of rivers meeting

and

Ruſh to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,
Roar thro' a thouſand channels to the main;
The diſtant ſhepherd trembling hears the ſound:
So mix both hoſts, and ſo their cries rebound.
The bold Antilochus the ſlaughter led,
The firſt who ſtrook a valiant Trojan dead:
At great Echepolus the lance arrives,
Raz'd his high creſt, and thro' his helmet drives;
Warm'd in the brain the brazen weapon lies,
And ſhades eternal ſettle o'er his eyes.
So ſinks a tow'r, that long aſſaults had ſtood
Of force and fire; its walls beſmear'd with blood.
Him, the bold * leader of th' Abantian throng
Seiz'd to deſpoil, and dragg'd the corps along:
But while he ſtrove to tug th' inſerted dart,
Agenor's jav'lin reach'd the hero's heart.
His flank, unguarded by his ample ſhield,
Admits the lance: He falls, and ſpurns the field;
The nerves unbrace'd ſupport his limbs no more;
The ſoul comes floating in a tide of gore.
Trojans and Greeks now gather round the ſlain;
The war renews, the warriors bleed again;
As o'er their prey rapacious wolves engage,
Man dies on man, and all is blood and rage.

and roaring, with two armies mingling in battle, is an image of that nobleneſs, which (to ſay no more) was worthy the invention of Homer.

Ver. 522. *The bold Antilochus.*] Antilochus the ſon of Neſtor is the firſt who begins the engagement. It ſeems as if the old hero having done the greateſt ſervice he was capable of at his years, in diſpoſing the troops in the beſt order (as we have ſeen before) had taken care to ſet his ſon at the head of them, to give him the glory of beginning the battle.

* Elphenor.

In

In blooming youth fair Simoiſius fell,
Sent by great Ajax to the ſhades of hell:
Fair Simoiſius, whom his mother bore
Amid the flocks on ſilver Simois ſhore:
The nymph deſcending from the hills of Ide,
To ſeek her parents on his flow'ry ſide,
Brought forth the babe, their common care and joy,
And thence from Simois nam'd the lovely boy.
Short was his date! by dreadful Ajax ſlain,
He falls, and renders all their cares in vain!
So falls a poplar, that in wat'ry ground
Rais'd high the head, with ſtately branches crown'd,
(Fell'd by ſome artiſt with his ſhining ſteel,
To ſhape the circle of the bending wheel)
Cut down it lies; tall, ſmooth, and largely ſpread,
With all its beauteous honours on its head;
There left a ſubject to the wind and rain,
And ſcorch'd by ſuns it withers on the plain.
Thus pierced by Ajax, Simoiſius lies
Stretch'd on the ſhore, and thus neglected dies.
At Ajax Antiphus his jav'lin threw;
The pointed lance with erring fury flew,
And Leucus, lov'd by wiſe Ulyſſes, ſlew.
He drops the corpſe of Simoiſius ſlain,
And ſinks a breathleſs carcaſe on the plain.
This ſaw Ulyſſes, and with grief enrage'd
Strode where the foremoſt of the foes engage'd;
Arm'd with his ſpear, he meditates the wound,
In act to throw; but cautious, look'd around.

Ver. 542 *In blooming youth fair Simoiſius fell.*] This prince received his name from the river Simois, on whoſe banks he was born. It was the cuſtom of the eaſtern people to give names to their children, derived from the moſt remarkable accidents of their birth. The holy Scripture is full of examples of this kind. It is alſo uſual in the Old Teſtament to compare princes to trees, cedars, etc. as Simoiſius is here reſembled to a poplar. Dacier.

Strode

Struck at his ſight, the Trojans backward drew,
And trembling heard the jav'lin as it flew.
A chief ſtood nigh who from Abydos came,
Old Priam's ſon, Democoon was his name;
The weapon enter'd cloſe above his ear,
Cold thro' his temples glides the whizzing ſpear;
With piercing ſhrieks the youth reſigns his breath,
His eye-balls darken with the ſhades of death;
Pond'rous he falls; his clanging arms reſound;
And his broad buckler rings againſt the ground.
Seiz'd with affright the boldeſt foes appear;
Ev'n Godlike Hector ſeems himſelf to fear;
Slow he gave way, the reſt tumultuous fled;
The Greeks with ſhouts preſs on, and ſpoil the dead;
But Phœbus now from Ilion's tow'ring height
Shines forth reveal'd, and animates the fight.
Trojans, be bold, and force with force oppoſe;
Your foaming ſteeds urge headlong on the foes!
Nor are their bodies rocks, nor ribb'd with ſteel;
Your weapons enter, and your ſtrokes they feel.
Have ye forgot what ſeem'd your dread before?
The great, the fierce Achilles fights no more.

Ver. 385. *But Phœbus now,*] Homer here introduces Apollo on the ſide of the Trojans: He had given them the aſſiſtance of Mars at the beginning of this battle; but Mars (which ſignifies courage without conduct) proving too weak to reſiſt Minerva (or courage with conduct) which the poet repreſents as conſtantly aiding his Greeks; they want ſome prudent management to rally them again: he therefore brings in a Wiſdom to aſſiſt Mars, under the appearance of Apollo.

Ver. 592. *Achilles fights no more.*] Homer from time to time puts his readers in mind of Achilles, during his abſence from the war; and finds occaſions of celebrating his valour with the higheſt praiſes. There cannot be a greater encomium than this, where Apollo himſelf tells the Trojans they have nothing to fear, ſince Achilles fights no longer againſt them. Dacier.

Apollo

Apollo thus from Ilion's lofty tow'rs,
Array'd in terrors, rouz'd the Trojan pow'rs:
While war's fierce goddeſs fires the Grecian foe,
And ſhouts and thunders in the fields below.
Then great Diores fell, by doom divine,
In vain his valour, and illuſtrious line.
A broken rock the force of Pirus threw,
(Who from cold Ænus led the Thracian crew)
Full on his ankle dropt the pond'rous ſtone,
Burſt the ſtrong nerves, and craſh'd the ſolid bone:
Supine he tumbles on the crimſon'd ſands,
Before his helpleſs friends, and native bands,
And ſpreads for aid his unavailing hands.
The foe ruſh'd furious as he pants for breath,
And thro' his navel drove the pointed death:
His guſhing entrails ſmoak'd upon the ground,
And the warm life came iſſuing from the wound.
His lance bold Thoas at the conqu'ror ſent,
Deep in his breaſt above the pap it went,
Amid the lungs was fix'd the winged wood,
And quiv'ring in his heaving boſom ſtood:
Till from the dying chief, approaching near,
Th' Ætolian warrior tugg'd his weighty ſpear:
Then ſudden wav'd his flaming faulchion round,
And gaſh'd his belly with a ghaſtly wound,
The corpſe now breathleſs on the bloody plain,
To ſpoil his arms the victor ſtrove in vain;
The Thracian bands againſt the victor preſs'd;
A grove of lances glitter'd at his breaſt.
Stern Thoas, glaring with revengeful eyes,
In ſullen fury ſlowly quits the prize.
Thus fell two heroes; one the pride of Thrace,
And one the leader of th' Epeian race;
Death's ſable ſhade at once o'ercaſt their eyes,
In duſt the vanquiſh'd, and the victor lies.

With

With copious ſlaughter all the fields are red,
And heap'd with growing mountains of the dead.
Had ſome brave chief this martial ſcene beheld,
By Pallas guarded thro' the dreadful field,
Might darts be bid to turn their points away,
And ſwords around him innocently play,
The war's whole art with wonder had he ſeen,
And counted heroes where he counted men.
So fought each hoſt, with thirſt of glory fir'd,
And crouds on crouds triumphantly expir'd.

Ver. 630. *Had ſome brave chief.*] The turning off in this place from the actions of the field, to repreſent to us a man with ſecurity and calmneſs walking through it; without being able to reprehend any thing in the whole action; this is not only a fine praiſe of the battle, but as it were a breathing place to the poetical ſpirit of the author, after having rapidly run along with the heat of the engagement: he ſeems like one who having got over a part of his journey, ſtops upon an eminence to look back upon the ſpace he has paſſed, and concludes the book with an agreeable pauſe or reſpite.

AN

ESSAY

ON

HOMER's BATTLES.

PERHAPS it may be neceſſary in this place, at the opening of Homer's battles, to premiſe ſome obſervations upon them in general. I ſhall firſt endeavour to ſhew the conduct of the poet herein, and next collect ſome antiquities, that tend to a more diſtinct underſtanding of thoſe deſcriptions which make ſo large a part of the poem.

One may very well apply to Homer himſelf, what he ſays of his heroes at the end of the fourth book, that whoſoever ſhould be guided through his battles by Minerva, and pointed to every ſcene of them, would ſee nothing through the whole but ſubjects of ſurprize and applauſe. When the reader reflects that no leſs than the compaſs of twelve books is taken up in theſe, he will have reaſon to wonder by what methods our author could prevent deſcriptions of ſuch a length from being tedious. It is not enough to ſay, that though the ſubject itſelf be the ſame, the actions are always different; that we have now diſtinct combats, now promiſcuous fights, now ſingle duels, now general engagements; or that the ſcenes are perpetually varied; we are now in the fields, now at the fortification of the Greeks, now at the ſhips, now at the river Scamander: but we muſt look farther into the art of the poet, to find the reaſons of this aſtoniſhing variety.

We may firſt obſerve that diverſity in the deaths of his warriors, which he has ſupplied by the vaſteſt fertility of invention. Theſe he diſtinguiſhes ſeveral ways: Sometimes by the characters of the men, their age, office, profeſſion, nation, family, etc. One is a blooming youth, whoſe father diſſuaded him from the war; one is a prieſt, whoſe piety could not ſave him; one is a ſportſman, whom Diana taught in vain; one is the native of a far-diſtant country, who is never to return; one is deſcended from a noble line, which ends in his death; one is made remarkable by his boaſting; another by his beſeeching; and another, who is diſtinguiſhed no way elſe, is marked by his habit, and ſingularity of his armour.

Sometimes he varies theſe deaths by the ſeveral poſtures in which his heroes are repreſented either fighting or falling. Some of theſe are ſo exceedingly exact, that one may gueſs from the very poſition of the combatant, whereabouts the wound will light: Others ſo very peculiar and uncommon, that they could only be the effect of an imagination which had ſearched through all the ideas of Nature. Such is that picture of Mydon in the fifth book, whoſe arm being numbed by a blow on the elbow, drops the reins that trail on the ground; and then being ſuddenly ſtruck on the temples, falls headlong from the chariot in a ſoft and deep place; where he ſinks up to the ſhoulders in the ſands, and continues a while fixed by the weight of his armour, with his legs quivering in the air, until he is trampled down by the horſes.

Another cauſe of this variety is the difference of the wounds that are given in the Iliad: they are by no means like the wounds deſcribed by moſt other poets, which are commonly made in the ſelf-ſame obvious places: the heart and head ſerve for all thoſe in general who underſtand no anatomy, and ſometimes for variety they kill men by wounds that are no where mortal but in their poems. As the whole human body is the ſubject of theſe, ſo nothing is more neceſſary to him who would deſcribe them well, than a thorough knowledge of its ſtructure, even though the poet is not *profeſſedly* to write of them as an anatomiſt; in the

ſame

ſame manner as an exact ſkill in anatomy is neceſſary to thoſe painters that would excel in drawing the naked, though they are not to make every muſcle as viſible as in a book of chirurgery. It appears from ſo many paſſages in Homer, that he was perfectly maſter of this ſcience, that it would be needleſs to cite any in particular. One may only obſerve, that if we thoroughly examine all the wounds he has deſcribed, tho' ſo infinite in number, and ſo many ways diverſified, we ſhall hardly find one which will contradict this obſervation.

I muſt juſt add a remark, That the various periphraſes and circumlocutions by which Homer expreſſes the ſingle act of dying, have ſupplied Virgil and the ſucceeding poets with all their manners of phraſing it. Indeed he repeats the ſame verſe on that occaſion more often than they——τὸν δὲ σκότος ὄσσ' ἐκάλυψε——Ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε ἐπ' αὐτῷ, etc. But though it muſt be owned he had more frequent occaſions for a line of this kind than any poet, as no other has deſcribed half ſo many deaths, yet one cannot aſcribe this to any ſterility of expreſſion, but to the genius of his times, that delighted in thoſe reiterated verſes. We find repetitions of the ſame ſort affected by the ſacred writers, ſuch as, *He was gathered to his people; He ſlept with his fathers*; and the like. And upon the whole, they have a certain antiquated harmony, not unlike the burden of a ſong, which the ear is willing to ſuffer, and as it were reſts upon.

As the perpetual horror of combats, and a ſucceſſion of images of death, could not but keep the imagination very much on the ſtretch; Homer has been careful to contrive ſuch reliefs and pauſes, as might divert the mind to ſome other ſcene, without loſing ſight of his principal object. His compariſons are the more frequent on this account; for a compariſon ſerves this end the moſt effectually of any thing, as it is at once correſpondent to, and differing from the ſubject. Thoſe critics who fancy, that the uſe of compariſons diſtracts the attention, and draws it from the firſt image which ſhould moſt employ it, (as that we loſe the idea of the battle itſelf, while we are led by a ſimile

mile to that of a deluge or a ſtorm:) Thoſe, I ſay, may as well imagine we loſe the thought of the ſun, when we ſee his reflection in the water, where he appears more diſtinctly, and is contemplated more at eaſe, than if we gazed directly at his beams. For it is with the eye of the imagination as it is with our corporal eye, it muſt ſometimes be taken off from the object in order to ſee it the better. The ſame critics that are diſpleaſed to have their fancy diſtracted (as they call it) are yet ſo inconſiſtent with themſelves as to object to Homer that his ſimiles are too much alike, and are too often derived from the ſame animal. But is it not more reaſonable (according to their own notion) to compare the ſame man always to the ſame animal, than to ſee him ſometimes a ſun, ſometimes a tree, and ſometimes a river? Though Homer ſpeaks of the ſame creature, he ſo diverſifies the circumſtances and accidents of the compariſons, that they always appear quite different. And to ſay truth, it is not ſo much the animal or the thing, as the action or poſture of them that employs our imagination: two different animals in the ſame action are more like to each other, than one and the ſame animal is to himſelf, in two different actions. And thoſe who in reading Homer are ſhocked that it is always a lion, may as well be angry that it is always a man.

What may ſeem more exceptionable, is his inſerting the ſame compariſons in the ſame words at length upon different occaſions, by which management he makes one ſingle image afford many ornaments to ſeveral parts of the poem. But may not one ſay, Homer is in this like a ſkilful improver, who places a beautiful ſtatue in a well diſpoſed garden ſo as to anſwer ſeveral viſtas, and by that artifice one ſingle figure ſeems multiplied into as many objects, as there are openings from whence it may be viewed?

What farther relieves and ſoftens theſe deſcriptions of battles, is the poet's wonderful art of introducing many pathetic circumſtances about the deaths of the heroes, which raiſe a different movement in the mind from what thoſe images naturally inſpire, I mean *compaſſion* and *pity*; when he cauſes us to look back upon

upon the loſt riches, poſſeſſions, and hopes of thoſe who die: When he tranſports us to their native countries and paternal ſeats, to ſee the griefs of their aged fathers, the deſpair and tears of their widows, or the abandoned condition of their orphans. Thus when Proteſilaus falls, we are made to reflect on the lofty palaces he left half finiſhed; when the ſons of Phænops are killed, we behold the mortifying diſtreſs of their wealthy father, who ſaw his eſtate divided before his eyes, and taken in truſt for ſtrangers. When Axylus dies, we are taught to compaſſionate the hard fate of that generous and hoſpitable man, whoſe houſe was the houſe of all men, and who deſerved that glorious elogy of *The friend of human kind.*

It is worth taking notice too, what uſe Homer every where makes of each little accident or circumſtance that can naturally happen in a battle, thereby to caſt a variety over his action; as well as of every turn of mind or emotion a hero can poſſibly feel, ſuch as reſentment, revenge, concern, confuſion, &c. The former of theſe makes his work reſemble a large hiſtory-piece, where even the leſs important figures and actions have yet ſome convenient place or corner to be ſhewn in; and the latter gives it all the advantages of tragedy, in thoſe various turns of paſſion that animate the ſpeeches of his heroes, and render his whole poem the moſt dramatic of any whatſoever.

But it muſt alſo be obſerved, that the conſtant machines of the Gods conduce very greatly to vary theſe long battles, by a continual change of the ſcene from earth to heaven. Homer perceived them too neceſſary for this purpoſe to abſtain from the uſe of them even after Jupiter had enjoined the deities not to act on either ſide. It is remarkable how many methods he has found to draw them into every book; where, if they dare not aſſiſt the warriors, at leaſt they are very helpful to the poet.

But there is nothing that more contributes to the variety, ſurprize, and *eclat* of Homer's battles, or is more perfectly admirable in itſelf, than that artful manner of taking meaſure, or (as one may ſay) gaging his heroes by each other, and thereby elevating

the character of one perſon, by the oppoſition of it to that of ſome other whom he is made to excel. So that he many times deſcribes one, only to imagine another, and raiſes one only to raiſe another. I cannot better exemplify this remark, than by giving an inſtance in the character of Diomed that lies before me. Let us obſerve by what a ſcale of oppoſitions he elevates this hero, in the fifth book, firſt to excel all human valour, and after to rival the gods themſelves. He diſtinguiſhes him firſt from the Grecian captains in general, each of whom he repreſents conquering a ſingle Trojan, while Diomed conſtantly encounters two at once; and while they are engaged each in his diſtinct poſt, he only is drawn fighting in every quarter, and ſlaughtering on every ſide. Next he oppoſes him to Pandarus, next to Æneas, and then to Hector. So of the gods, he ſhews them firſt againſt Venus, then Apollo, then Mars, and laſtly in the eighth book againſt Jupiter himſelf in the midſt of his thunders. The ſame conduct is obſervable more or leſs in regard to every perſonage of his work.

This ſubordination of the heroes is one of the cauſes that make each of his battles riſe above the other in greatneſs, terror, and importance, to the end of the poem. If Diomed has performed all theſe wonders in the firſt combats, it is but to raiſe Hector, at whoſe appearance he begins to fear. If in the next battles Hector triumphs not only over Diomed, but over Ajax and Patroclus, ſets fire to the fleet, wins the armour of Achilles, and ſingly eclipſes all the heroes; in the midſt of all his glory, Achilles appears, Hector flies, and is ſlain.

The manner in which his gods are made to act, no leſs advances the gradation we are ſpeaking of. In the firſt battles they are ſeen only in ſhort and ſeparate excurſions: Venus aſſiſts Paris, Minerva Diomed, or Mars Hector. In the next, a clear ſtage is left for Jupiter to diſplay his omnipotence, and turn the fate of armies alone In the laſt, all the powers of heaven are engaged and banded into regular parties, gods encountering gods, Jove encouraging them with his thunders, Neptune raiſing his tempeſts, heaven flaming

ming, earth trembling, and Pluto himſelf ſtarting from the throne of hell.

II. I am now to take notice of ſome cuſtoms of antiquity relating to the arms and art military of thoſe times, which are proper to be known, in order to form a right notion of our author's deſcriptions of war.

That Homer copied the manners and cuſtoms of the age he writ of, rather than of that he lived in, has been obſerved in ſome inſtances. As that he no where repreſents cavalry or trumpets to have been uſed in the Trojan wars, though they apparently were in his own time. It is not therefore impoſſible but there may be found in his works ſome deficiencies in the art of war, which are not to be imputed to his ignorance, but to his judgement.

Horſes had not been brought into Greece long before the ſiege of Troy. They were originally eaſtern animals, and if we find at that very period ſo great a number of them reckoned up in the wars of the Iſraelites, it is the leſs a wonder, conſidering they came from Aſia. The practice of riding them was ſo little known in Greece a few years before, that they looked upon the Centaurs who firſt uſed it, as monſters compounded of men and horſes. Neſtor in the firſt Iliad, ſays, he had ſeen theſe Centaurs in his youth, and Polypætes, in the ſecond, is ſaid to have been born on the day that his father expelled them from Pelion to the deſarts of Æthica. They had no other uſe of horſes than to draw their chariots in battle, ſo that whenever Homer ſpeaks of *fighting from an horſe, taming an horſe*, or the like, it is conſtantly to be underſtood of fighting from a chariot, or taming horſes to that ſervice. This (as we have ſaid) was a piece of decorum in the poet; for in his own time they were arrived to ſuch a perfection in horſemanſhip, that in the fifteenth Iliad, Ver. 822. we have a ſimile taken from an extraordinary feat of activity, where one man manages four horſes at once, and leaps from the back of one to another at full ſpeed.

If we conſider in what high eſteem among warriors theſe noble animals muſt have been at their firſt coming into

into Greece, we ſhall the leſs wonder at the frequent occaſions Homer has taken to deſcribe and celebrate them. It is not ſo ſtrange to find them ſet almoſt upon a level with men, at the time when a horſe in the prizes was of equal value with a captive.

The chariots were in all probability very low. For we frequently find in the Iliad, that a perſon who ſtands erect on a chariot is killed (and ſometimes by a ſtroke on the head) by a foot-ſoldier with a ſword. This may further appear from the eaſe and readineſs with which they alight or mount on every occaſion; to facilitate which, the chariots were made open behind. That the wheels were but ſmall, may be gueſſed from a cuſtom they had of taking them off, and ſetting them on, as they were laid by, or made uſe of. Hebe in the fifth book, puts on the wheels of Juno's chariot, when ſhe calls for it in haſte: and it ſeems to be with alluſion to the ſame practice, that it is ſaid in Exodus, ch. 14. *The Lord took off their chariot wheels, ſo that they drove them heavily* The ſides were alſo low; for whoever is killed in his chariot throughout the poem, conſtantly falls to the ground, as having nothing to ſupport him. That the whole machine was very ſmall and light, is evident from a paſſage in the tenth Iliad; where Diomed debates whether he ſhall draw the chariot of Rheſus out of the way, or carry it on his ſhoulders to a place of ſafety. All the particulars agree with the repreſentations of the chariots on the moſt ancient Greek coins; where the tops of them reached not ſo high as the backs of the horſes, the wheels are yet lower, and the heroes who ſtand in them are ſeen from the knee upwards *. This may ſerve to ſhew thoſe critics are under a miſtake, who blame Homer for making his warriors ſometimes retire behind their chariots, as if it were a piece of cowardice: which was as little diſgraceful then, as it is now to alight from one's horſe in a battle, on any neceſſary emergency.

There were generally two perſons in each chariot, one of whom was wholly employed in guiding the

* See the Collection of Goltzius, &c.

horſes,

horſes. They uſed indifferently two, three, or four horſes: from hence it happens, that ſometimes when a horſe is killed, the hero continues the fight with the two or more that remain; and at other times a warrior retreats upon the loſs of one; not that he has leſs courage than the other, but that he has fewer horſes.

Their ſwords were all broad cutting ſwords, for we find they never ſtab but with their ſpears. The ſpears were uſed two ways, either to puſh with, or to caſt from them, like the miſſive javelins. It ſeems ſurpriſing, that a man ſhould throw a dart or ſpear with ſuch force, as to pierce through both ſides of the armour and the body (as is often deſcribed in Homer.) For if the ſtrength of the men was gigantic, the armour muſt have been ſtrong in proportion. Some ſolution might be given for this, if we imagined the armour was generally braſs, and the weapons pointed with iron; and if we could fancy that Homer called the ſpears and ſwords brazen in the ſame manner that he calls the reins of a bridle ivory, only from the ornaments about them. But there are paſſages where the point of the ſpear is expreſsly ſaid to be of braſs, as in the deſcription of that of Hector in Iliad 6. Pauſanias, Laconicis takes it for granted, that the arms, as well offenſive as defenſive, were braſs. He ſays the ſpear of Achilles was kept in his time in the temple of Minerva, the top and point of which were of braſs; and the ſword of Meriones, in that of Æſculapius among the Nicomedians, was entirely of the ſame metal. But, be it as it will, there are examples even at this day of ſuch a prodigious force in caſting darts, as almoſt exceeds credibility. The Turks and Arabs will pierce through thick planks with darts of hardened wood; which can only be attributed to their being bred (as the ancients were) to that exerciſe, and to the ſtrength and agility acquired by a conſtant practice of it.

We may aſcribe to the ſame cauſe their power of caſting ſtones of a vaſt weight, which appears a common practice in theſe battles. Thoſe are in a great error, who imagine this to be only a fictitious embelliſhment of the poet, which was one of the exerciſes of war among the ancient Greeks and Orientals.

* St.

* St. Jerome tells us, it was an old cuſtom in Palæſtine, and in uſe in his own time, to have round ſtones of a great weight kept in the caſtles and villages, for the youth to try their ſtrength with. And the cuſtom is yet extant in ſome parts of Scotland, where ſtones for the ſame purpoſe are laid at the gates of great houſes, which they call *putting-ſtones*.

Another conſideration which will account for many things that may ſeem uncouth in Homer, is the reflection, that, before the uſe of fire-arms, there was infinitely more ſcope for perſonal valour than in the modern battles. Now whenſoever the perſonal ſtrength of the combatants happened to be unequal, the declining a ſingle combat could not be ſo diſhonourable as it is in this age, when the arms we make uſe of put all men on a level. For a ſoldier of far inferior ſtrength may manage a rapier, or fire-arms ſo expertly, as to be an overmatch to his adverſary. This may appear a ſufficient excuſe for what in the modern conſtruction might ſeem cowardice in Homer's heroes, when they avoid engaging with others, whoſe bodily ſtrength exceeds their own. The maxims of valour in all times were founded upon reaſon, and the cowardice ought rather in this caſe to be imputed to him who braves his inferior. There was alſo more leiſure in their battles before the knowledge of fire-arms; and this in a good degree accounts for thoſe harangues his heroes make to each other in the time of combat.

There was another practice frequently uſed by theſe ancient warriors, which was to ſpoil an enemy of his arms after they had ſlain him; and this cuſtom we ſee them frequently purſuing with ſuch eagerneſs, as if they looked on their victory not complete till this point was gained. Some modern critics have accuſed

* Mos eſt in urbibus Paleſtinæ, et uſque hodie per omnem Judæam vetus conſuetudo ſervatur, ut in viculis, oppidis, et caſtellis rotundi ponantur lapides graviſſimi ponderis, ad quos juvenes exercere ſe ſolent, et eos pro varietate virium ſublevare, alii ad genua, alii ad umbilicum, alii ad humeros, ad caput, nonnulli ſuper verticem, rectis junctiſque manibus, magnitudinem virium demonſtrantes, pondus attollunt.

them

them of avarice on account of this practice, which might probably ariſe from the great value and ſcarceneſs of armour in that early time and infancy of war. It afterwards became a point of honour, like gaining a ſtandard from the enemy. Moſes and David ſpeak of the pleaſure of obtaining many ſpoils. They preſerved them as monuments of victory, and even religion at laſt became intereſted herein, when thoſe ſpoils were conſecrated in the temples of the tutelar deities of the conqueror.

The reader may eaſily ſee, I ſet down theſe heads juſt as they occur to my memory, and only as hints to farther obſervations; which any one who is converſant in Homer cannot fail to make, if he will but think a little in the ſame track.

It is no part of my deſign to inquire what progreſs had been made in the art of war at this early period: The bare peruſal of the Iliad will beſt inform us of it. But what I think tends more immediately to the better comprehenſion of theſe deſcriptions, is to give a ſhort view of the ſcene of war, the ſituation of Troy, and thoſe places which Homer mentions, with the proper field of each battle: putting together, for this purpoſe, thoſe paſſages in my author, that give any light to this matter.

The ancient city of Troy ſtood at a greater diſtance from the ſea, than thoſe ruins which have ſince been ſhewn for it. This may be gathered from Iliad v. ver. (of the original) 791. where it is ſaid, that the Trojans never durſt ſally out of the walls of their town, until the retirement of Achilles; but afterwards combated the Grecians at their very ſhips, far from the city. For had Troy ſtood (as Strabo obſerves) ſo nigh the ſea-ſhore, it had been madneſs in the Greeks not to have built any fortification before their fleet until the tenth year of the ſiege, when the enemy was ſo near them: and on the other hand, it had been cowardice in the Trojans not to have attempted any thing all that time, againſt an army that lay unfortified and unintrenched. Beſides, the intermediate ſpace had been too ſmall to afford a field for ſo many various adventures

ventures and actions of war. The places about Troy particularly mentioned by Homer, lie in this order.

1. The Scæan gate: This opened to the field of battle, and was that through which the Trojans made their excurſions. Cloſe to this ſtood the beech-tree, ſacred to Jupiter, which Homer generally mentions with it.

2. The hill of wild fig-trees. It joined to the walls of Troy on one ſide, and extended to the highway on the other. The firſt appears from what Andromache ſays in Iliad vi. ver. 432. that *the walls were in danger of being ſcaled from this hill*; and the laſt from Iliad xxii. v. 145. etc.

3. The two ſprings of Scamander. Theſe were a little higher on the ſame highway. Ibid.

4. Callicolone, the name of a pleaſant hill, that lay near the river Simois, on the other ſide of the town. Iliad xx. ver. 53.

5. Bateia, or the ſepulchre of Myrinne, ſtood a little before the city in the plain. Iliad ii. ver. 318. of the Catalogue.

6. The monument of Ilus: near the middle of the plain. Iliad xi. ver. 166.

7. The tomb of Æſyetes commanded the proſpect of the fleet, and that part of the ſea-coaſt. Iliad ii. ver. 301. of the Catalogue.

It ſeems by the 368th verſe of the ſecond Iliad, that the Grecian army was drawn up under the ſeveral leaders by the banks of Scamander, on that ſide towards the ſhips: In the mean time that of Troy, and the auxiliaries, was ranged in order at Myrinne's ſepulchre. Ibid. ver. 320. of the Catal. The place of the firſt battle, where Diomede performs his exploits, was near the joining of Simois and Scamander; for Juno and Pallas coming to him, alight at the confluence of thoſe rivers. Il. v. ver. 776. and that the Greeks had not yet paſt the ſtream, but fought on that ſide next the fleet, appears from ver. 791. of the ſame book, where Juno ſays, *the Trojans now brave them at their very ſhips*. But in the beginning of the ſixth book, the place of battle is ſpecified to be between the rivers of Simois

Simois and Scamander; ſo that the Greeks (though Homer does not particulariſe when, or in what manner) had then croſſed the ſtream towards Troy.

The engagement in the eighth book is evidently cloſe to the Grecian fortification on the ſhore That night Hector lay at Ilus's tomb in the field, as Dolon tells us, lib. x. ver. 415. And in the eleventh book the battle is chiefly about Ilus's tomb.

In the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth, about the fortification of the Greeks, and in the fifteenth at the ſhips.

In the ſixteenth, the Trojans being repulſed by Patroclus, they engage between the fleet, the river, and the Grecian wall: See ver. 396. Patroclus ſtill advancing, they fight at the gates of Troy, ver. 700. In the ſeventeenth, the fight about the body of Patroclus is under the Trojan wall, ver. 403. His body being carried off, Hector and Æneas purſue the Greeks to the fortification, ver. 760. And in the eighteenth, upon Achilles's appearing, they retire and encamp without the fortification.

In the twentieth, the fight is ſtill on that ſide next the ſea; for the Trojans being purſued by Achilles, paſs over the Scamander as they run toward Troy: See the beginning of book xxi. The following battles are either in the river itſelf, or between that and the city, under whoſe walls Hector is killed in the 22d book, which puts an end to the battles of the Iliad.

N. B. *The verſes above are cited according to the number of lines in the Greek.*

THE ILIAD.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

The acts of Diomede.

DIOMEDE, aſſiſted by Pallas, performs wonders in this day's battle. Pandarus wounds him with an arrow, but the Goddeſs cures him, enables him to diſcern Gods from mortals, and prohibits him from contending with any of the former, excepting Venus. Æneas joins Pandarus to oppoſe him, Pandarus is killed, and Æneas in great danger but for the aſſiſtance of Venus; who, as ſhe is removing her ſon from the fight, is wounded on the hand by Diomede. Apollo ſeconds her in his reſcue, and at length carries off Æneas to Troy, where he is healed in the temple of Pergamus. Mars rallies the Trojans, and aſſiſts Hector to make a ſtand. In the mean time, Æneas is reſtored to the field, and they overthrow ſeveral of the Greeks; among the reſt Tlepolemus is ſlain by Sarpedon. Juno and Minerva deſcend to reſiſt Mars; the latter incites Diomede to to go againſt that God; he wounds him, and ſends him groaning to heaven.

The firſt battle continues through this book. The ſcene is the ſame as in the former.

BUT Pallas now Tydides' ſoul inſpires, [fires,
Fills with her force, and warms with all her

Above

Ver. 1. *But Pallas now,* &c.] As in every juſt hiſtory-picture there is one principal figure, to which all the reſt refer and are ſubſervient;

Above the Greeks his deathleſs fame to raiſe,
And crown her hero with diſtinguiſh'd praiſe.
High on his helm celeſtial lightnings play,
His beamy ſhield emits a living ray;

Th' un-

ſubſervient; ſo in each battle of the Iliad there is one principal perſon, that may properly be called the hero of that day or action. This conduct preſerves the unity of the piece, and keeps the imagination from being diſtracted and confuſed with a wild number of independent figures; which have no ſubordination to each other. To make this probable, Homer ſuppoſes theſe extraordinary meaſures of courage to be the immediate gift of the gods; who beſtow them ſometimes upon one, and ſometimes upon another, as they think fit to make them the inſtruments of their deſigns; an opinion conformable to true theology.

Ver. 1. *Tydides.*] That we may enter into the ſpirit and beauty of this book, it will be proper to ſettle the true character of Diomede, who is the hero of it. Achilles is no ſooner retired, but Homer raiſes his other Greeks to ſupply his abſence; like ſtars that ſhine each in his due revolution, until the principal hero riſes again, and eclipſes all others. As Diomod is the firſt in this office, he ſeems to have more of the character of Achilles than any beſides. He has naturally an exceſs of boldneſs, and too much fury in his temper, forward and intrepid like the other, and running after gods or men promiſcuouſly as they offer themſelves. But what differences his character is, that he is ſoon reclaimed by advice, hears thoſe that are more experienced, and in a word, obeys Minerva in all things. He is aſſiſted by the patroneſs of wiſdom and arms, as he is eminent both for prudence and valour. That which characteriſes his prudence, is a quick ſagacity and preſence of mind in all emergencies, and an undiſturb'd readineſs in the very article of danger. And what is particular in his valour is agreeable to theſe qualities, his actions being always performed with remarkable dexterity, activity, and diſpatch. As the gentle and manageable turn of his mind ſeems drawn with an oppoſition to the boiſterous temper of Achilles, ſo his bodily excellencies ſeem deſigned as in contraſt to thoſe of Ajax, who appears with great ſtrength, but heavy and unwieldy.

The wonderful actions he performs in this battle, ſeem to be the effect of a noble reſentment at the reproach he had received from Agamemnon in the foregoing book, to which theſe deeds are the

Th' unweary'd blaze inceſſant ſtreams ſupplies,
Like the red ſtar that fires th' autumnal ſkies,
When freſh he rears his radiant orb to fight,
And bath'd in ocean, ſhoots a keener light.
Such glories Pallas on the chief beſtow'd,
Such, from his arms, the fierce effulgence flow'd:
Onward ſhe drives him, furious to engage,
Where the fight burns, and where the thickeſt rage.
The ſons of Dares firſt the combat ſought,
A wealthy prieſt, but rich without a fault;
In Vulcan's fane, the father's days were led,
The ſons to toils of glorious battle bred;
Theſe ſingled from their troops the fight maintain,
Theſe from their ſteeds, Tydides on the plain.
Fierce for renown the brother chiefs draw near,
And firſt bold Phegeus caſt his ſounding ſpear,

anſwer. He becomes immediately the ſecond hero of Greece, and dreaded equally with Achilles by the Trojans. At the firſt ſight of him his enemies make a queſtion, whether he is a man or a God. Æneas and Pandarus go againſt him, whoſe approach terrifies Sthenelus, and the apprehenſion of ſo great a warrior marvellouſly exalts the intrepidity of Diomede. Æneas himſelf is not ſaved but by the interpoſing of a deity: he purſues and wounds that deity, and Æneas again eſcapes only by the help of a ſtronger power, Apollo. He attempts Apollo too, retreats not till the gods threaten him in his own voice, and even then retreats but a few ſteps. When he ſees Hector and Mars himſelf in open arms againſt him, he had not retired though he was wounded; but in obedience to Minerva, and then retires with his face towards them. But as ſoon as ſhe permits him to engage with that god, he conquers and ſends him groaning to heaven. What invention, and what conduct, appears in this whole epiſode! What boldneſs in raiſing a character to ſuch a pitch, and what judgment in raiſing it by ſuch degrees! While the moſt daring flights of poetry are employed to move our admiration, and at the ſame time the juſteſt and cloſeſt allegory, to reconcile thoſe flights to moral truth and probability!

Which

Which o'er the warrior's ſhoulder took its courſe,
And ſpent in empty air its erring force.
Not ſo, Tydides, flew thy lance in vain,
But pierce'd his breaſt, and ſtretch'd him on the plain.
Seiz'd with unuſual fear, Idæus fled,
Left the rich chariot, and his brother dead.
And had not Vulcan lent celeſtial aid,
He too had ſunk to death's eternal ſhade;
But in a ſmoaky cloud the god of fire
Preſerv'd the ſon in pity to the ſire.
The ſteeds and chariot, to the navy led,
Increas'd the ſpoils of gallant Diomede.
Struck with amaze, and ſhame, the Trojan crew
Or ſlain, or fled, the ſons of Dares view;
When by the blood-ſtain'd hand Minerva preſt
The God of battles, and this ſpeech addreſt.
Stern pow'r of war! by whom the mighty fall,
Who bathe in blood, and ſhake the lofty wall!
Let the brave chiefs their glorious toils divide;
And whoſe the conqueſt mighty Jove decide:
While we from interdicted fields retire,
Nor tempt the wrath of Heav'n's avenging Sire.
Her words allay th' impetuous warrior's heat,
The God of arms and martial Maid retreat;

Ver. 40. *Who bathe in blood.*] It may ſeem ſomething unnatural, that Pallas, at a time when ſhe is endeavouring to work upon Mars under the appearance of benevolence and kindneſs, ſhould make uſe of terms which ſeem ſo full of bitter reproaches; but theſe will appear very properly applied to this warlike deity. For perſons of this martial character, who ſcorning equity and reaſon, carry all things by force, are better pleaſed to be celebrated for their power than their virtue.

Ver. 46. *The god of arms and martial maid retreat.*] The retreat of Mars from the Trojans intimates that courage forſook them: It may be ſaid, then, that Minerva's abſence from the Greeks will ſignify that wiſdom deſerted them alſo. It is true ſhe does deſert them, but it is at a time when there was more occaſion for gallant actions than for wiſe counſels. Euſtathius.

Remov'd from fight, on Xanthus' flow'ry bounds
They ſat, and liſten'd to the dying ſounds.
Meantime, the Greeks the Trojan race purſue,
And ſome bold chieftain ev'ry leader ſlew:
Firſt Odius falls, and bites the bloody ſand,
His death ennobled by Atrides' hand;
As he to flight his wheeling car addreſt,
The ſpeedy jav'lin drove from back to breaſt.
In duſt the mighty Halizonian lay,
His arms reſound, the ſpirit wings its way.
Thy fate was next, O Phæſtus! doom'd to feel
The great Idomeneus' portended ſteel;
Whom Borus ſent (his ſon and only joy)
From fruitful Tarne to the fields of Troy.
The Cretan jav'lin reach'd him from afar,
And pierce'd his ſhoulder as he mounts his car;
Back from the car he tumbles to the ground,
And everlaſting ſhades his eyes ſurround.

Then

Ver. 49. *The Greeks the Trojan race purſue.*] Homer always appears very zealous for the honour of Greece, which alone might be a proof of his being of that country, againſt the opinion of thoſe who would have him of other nations.

It is obſervable through the whole Iliad, that he endeavours every where to repreſent the Greeks as ſuperior to the Trojans in valour and the art of war. In the beginning of the third book he deſcribes the Trojans ruſhing on to the battle in a barbarous and confuſed manner, with loud ſhouts and cries, while the Greeks advance in the moſt profound ſilence and exact order. And in the latter part of the fourth book, where the two armies march to the engagement, the Greeks are animated by Pallas, while Mars inſtigates the Trojans, the poet attributing by this plain allegory to the former a well-conducted valour, to the latter raſh ſtrength and brutal force: ſo that the abilities of each nation are diſtinguiſhed by the characters of the deities who aſſiſt them.

Ver. 63. *Back from the car he tumbles.*] It is in poetry as in painting, the poſtures and attitudes of each figure ought to be different: Homer takes care not to draw two perſons in the ſame poſture;

Then dy'd Scamandrius, expert in the chace,
In woods and wilds to wound the ſavage race;
Diana taught him all her ſylvan arts,
To bend the bow, and aim unerring darts:
But vainly here Diana's arts he tries,
The fatal lance arreſts him as he flies;
From Menelaus' arm the weapon ſent,
Thro' his broad back and heaving boſom went:
Down ſinks the warrior with a thund'ring ſound,
His brazen armour rings againſt the ground.
Next artful Phereclus untimely fell;
Bold Merion ſent him to the realms of hell.
Thy father's ſkill, O Phereclus, was thine,
The graceful fabric and the fair deſign;
For lov'd by Pallas, Pallas did impart
To him the ſhipwright's and the builder's art.
Beneath his hand the fleet of Paris roſe,
The fatal cauſe of all his country's woes;
But he, the myſtic will of Heav'n unknown,
Nor ſaw his country's peril, nor his own.
The hapleſs artiſt, while confus'd he fled,
The ſpear of Merion mingled with the dead.
Thro' his right hip with forceful fury caſt,
Between the bladder and the bone it paſt:
Prone on his knees he falls with fruitleſs cries,
And death in laſting ſlumber ſeals his eyes.

poſture; one is tumbled from his chariot, another is ſlain as he aſcends it, a third as he endeavours to eſcape on foot, a conduct which is every where obſerved by the poet. Euſtathius.

Ver. 75. *Next artful Phereclus.*] This character of Phereclus is finely imagined, and preſents a noble moral in an uncommon manner. There ran a report, that the Trojans had formerly received an oracle; commanding them to follow huſbandry, and not apply themſelves to navigation. Homer from hence takes occaſion to feign, that the ſhipwright, who preſumed to build the fleet of Paris when he took his fatal voyage to Greece, was overtaken by the divine vengeance ſo long after as in this battle.

From

From Meges' force the ſwift Pedæus fled,
Antenor's offspring from a foreign bed,
Whoſe gen'rous ſpouſe, Theano, heav'nly fair,
Nurs'd the young ſtranger with a mother's care.
How vain thoſe cares! when Meges in the rear
Eull in his nape infix'd the fatal ſpear;
Swift thro' his crackling jaws the weapon glides,
And the cold tongue and grinning teeth divides:
Then dy'd Hypſenor, gen'rous and divine,
Sprung from the brave Dolopion's mighty line,
Who near ador'd Scamander made abode,
Prieſt of the ſtream, and honour'd as a God.

Ver. 93. *Whoſe gen'rous ſpouſe, Theano.*] Homer, in this remarkable paſſage, commends the fair Theano for breeding up a baſtard of her huſbands with the ſame tenderneſs as her own children. This lady was a woman of the firſt quality, and (as it appears in the ſixth Iliad) the high prieſteſs of Minerva: ſo that one cannot imagine the education of this child was impoſed upon her by the authority or power of Antenor: Homer himſelf takes care to remove any ſuch derogatory notion; by particularizing the motive of this unuſual piece of humanity to have been to pleaſe her huſband.

Ver. 99. ——— *Hypſenor, gen'rous and divine,*
Sprung from the brave Dolopion's mighty line;
Who near ador'd Scamander made abode:
Prieſt of the ſtream, and honour'd as a god.]

From the number of circumſtances put together here, and in many other paſſages, of the parentage, place of abode, profeſſion, and quality of the perſons our author mentions; I think it is plain he compoſed his poem from ſome records or traditions of the actions of the times preceding, and complied with the truth of hiſtory. Otherwiſe theſe particular deſcriptions of genealogies and other minute circumſtances would have been an affectation extremely needleſs and unreaſonable. This conſideration will account for ſeveral things that ſeem odd or tedious, not to add, that one may naturally believe he took theſe occaſions of paying a compliment to many great men and families of his patrons, both in Greece and Aſia.

On

On him, amidſt the flying numbers found,
Eurypylus inflicts a deadly wound;
On his broad ſhoulder fell the forceful brand,
Thence glancing downward lopp'd his holy hand,
Which ſtain'd with ſacred blood the bluſhing ſand.
Down ſunk the prieſt: the purple hand of death
Clos'd his dim eye, and fate ſuppreſs'd his breath.
Thus toil'd the chiefs, in diff'ring parts engag'd,
In ev'ry quarter fierce Tydides rage'd,
Amid the Greek, amid the Trojan train,
Rapt thro' the ranks he thunders o'er the plain,
Now here, now there, he darts from place to place,
Pours on the rear, or lightens in their face.
Thus from high hills the torrents ſwift and ſtrong
Deluge whole fields, and ſweep the trees along,
Thro' ruin'd moles the ruſhing wave reſounds,
O'erwhelms the bridge, and burſts the lofty bounds;
The yellow harveſts of the ripen'd year,
And flatted vineyards, one ſad waſte appear!
While Jove deſcends in fluicy ſheets of rain,
And all the labours of mankind are vain.
So rage'd Tydides, boundleſs in his ire,
Drove armies back, and made all Troy retire.

Ver. 108. *Down ſunk the prieſt.*] Homer makes him die upon the cutting off his arm, which is an inſtance of his ſkill; for the great flux of blood that muſt follow ſuch a wound, would be the immediate cauſe of death.

Ver. 116. *Thus from high hills the torrents ſwift and ſtrong.*] This whole paſſage (ſays Euſtathius) is extremely beautiful. It deſcribes the hero carried by an enthuſiaſtic valour into the midſt of his enemies, and ſo mingled with their ranks as if himſelf were a Trojan. And the ſimile wonderfully illuſtrates this fury, proceeding from an uncommon infuſion of courage from heaven, in reſembling it not to a conſtant river, but a torrent riſing from an extraordinary burſt of rain.

With

With grief the * leader of the Lycian band
Saw the wide waſte of his deſtructive hand:
His bended bow againſt the chief he drew;
Swift to the mark the thirſty arrow flew,
Whoſe forky point the hollow breaſt-plate tore,
Deep in his ſhoulder pierce'd, and drank the gore:
The ruſhing ſtream his brazen armour dy'd,
While the proud archer thus exulting cry'd.
Hither ye Trojans, hither drive your ſteeds!
Lo! by our hand the braveſt Grecian bleeds.
Not long the deathful dart he can ſuſtain;
Or Phœbus urge'd me to theſe fields in vain.
So ſpoke he, boaſtful; but the winged dart
Stopt ſhort of life, and mock'd the ſhooter's art.
The wounded chief behind his car retir'd,
The helping hand of Sthenelus requir'd;
Swift from his ſeat he leap'd upon the ground,
And tugg'd the weapon from the guſhing wound;
When thus the king his guardian pow'r addreſt,
The purple current wand'ring o'er his veſt.
O progeny of Jove! unconquer'd maid!
If e'er my godlike ſire deſerv'd thy aid,
If e'er I felt thee in the fighting field;
Now, Goddeſs, now, thy ſacred ſuccour yield.
Oh give my lance to reach the Trojan knight,
Whoſe arrow wounds the chief thou guardſt in fight;
And lay the boaſter grov'ling on the ſhore,
That vaunts theſe eyes ſhall view the light no more.

* Pandarus.

Ver. 139. *The dart ſtop ſhort of life.*] Homer ſays it did not kill him, and I am at a loſs why M. Dacier tranſlates it, *The wound was ſlight*; when juſt after the arrow is ſaid to have pierced *quite through*, and ſhe herſelf there turns it, *Perçoit l'eſpaule d'outre en outre*. Had it been ſo ſlight, he would not have needed the immediate aſſiſtance of Minerva to reſtore his uſual vigour, and enable him to continue the fight.

Thus

Thus pray'd Tydides, and Minerva heard,
His nerves confirm'd, his languid ſpirits chear'd;
He feels each limb with wonted vigour light;
His beating boſom claims the promis'd fight.
Be bold (ſhe cry'd) in ev'ry combat ſhine,
War be thy province, thy protection mine;
Ruſh to the fight, and ev'ry foe controul;
Wake each paternal virtue in thy ſoul:
Strength ſwells thy boiling breaſt, infus'd by me,
And all thy Godlike father breathes in thee!
Yet more, from mortal miſts I purge thy eyes,
And ſet to view the warring deities.
Theſe ſee thou ſhun, thro' all th' embattled plain,
Nor raſhly ſtrive where human force is vain.
If Venus mingle in the martial band,
Her ſhalt thou wound: So Pallas gives command.
With that, the blue-ey'd virgin wing'd her flight;
The hero ruſh'd impetuous to the fight;
With tenfold ardour now invades the plain,
Wild with delay, and more enrage'd by pain.
As on the fleecy flocks, when hunger calls,
Amidſt the field a brindled lion falls;
If chance ſome ſhepherd with a diſtant dart
The ſavage wound, he rouſes at the ſmart,
He foams, he roars; the ſhepherd dares not ſtay,
But trembling leaves the ſcatt'ring flocks a prey.
Heaps fall on heaps; he bathes with blood the ground,
Then leaps victorious o'er the lofty mound.

Ver. 164. *From mortal miſts I purge thy eyes.*] This fiction of Homer (ſays M. Dacier) is founded upon an important truth of religion not unknown to the pagans, that God only can open the eyes of men, and enable them to ſee what they cannot diſcover by their own capacity. There are frequent examples of in the Old Teſtament. God opens the eyes of Hagar that ſhe might ſee the fountain, in Gen. xxi. ver. 14. So Numb. xxii. ver. 31. *The Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he ſaw the angel of the Lord ſtanding in his way, and his ſword drawn in his hand.*

Not

Not with leſs fury ſtern Tydides flew;
And two brave leaders at an inſtant ſlew:
Aſtynous breathleſs fell, and by his ſide
His people's paſtor, good Hypenor, dy'd;
Aſtynous' breaſt the deadly lance receives,
Hypenor's ſhoulder his broad faulchion cleaves.
Thoſe ſlain he left; and ſprung with noble rage,
Abas and Polyidus to engage;
Sons of Eurydamas, who wiſe and old,
Could fates foreſee, and myſtic dreams unfold;
The youths return'd not from the doubtful plain,
And the ſad father try'd his arts in vain;
No myſtic dream could make their fates appear,
Tho' now determin'd by Tydides' ſpear.
Young Xanthus next, and Thöon felt his rage,
The joy and hope of Phænops' feeble age;
Vaſt was his wealth, and theſe the only heirs
Of all his labours, and a life of cares,
Cold death o'ertakes them in their blooming years,
And leaves their father's unavailing tears:
To ſtrangers now deſcends his heapy ſtore,
The race forgotten, and the name no more.
Two ſons of Priam in one chariot ride,
Glitt'ring in arms, and combate ſide by ſide.
As when the lordly lion ſeeks his food
Where grazing heifers range the lonely wood,
He leaps amidſt them with a furious bound,
Bends their ſtrong necks, and tears them to the ground:
So from their ſeats the brother-chiefs are torn,
Their ſteeds and chariot to the navy born.

Ver. 202. *To ſtrangers now deſcends his wealthy ſtore.*] This is a circumſtance, than which nothing could be imagined more tragical, conſidering the character of the father. Homer ſays the truſtees of the remote collateral relations ſeized the eſtate before his eyes (according to a cuſtom of thoſe times) which to a covetous old man muſt be the greateſt of miſeries.

With

With deep concern divine Æneas view'd
The foe prevailing, and his friends purſu'd,
Thro' the thick ſtorm of ſinging ſpears he flies,
Exploring Pandarus with careful eyes.
At length he found Lycaon's mighty ſon;
To whom the chief of Venus' race begun.
Where, Pandarus, are all thy honours now,
Thy winged arrows and unerring bow,

Ver. 212. *Divine Æneas.*] It is here Æneas begins to act, and if we take a view of the whole epiſode of this hero in Homer, where he makes but an under-part, it will appear that Virgil has kept him perfectly in the ſame character in his poem, where he ſhines as the firſt hero. His piety and his valour, though not drawn at ſo full a length, are marked no leſs in the original than in the copy. It is the manner of Homer to expreſs very ſtrongly the character of each of his perſons in the firſt ſpeech he is made to utter in the poem. In this of Æneas, there is a great air of piety in thoſe ſtrokes, "Is he ſome god who puniſhes Troy for "having neglected his ſacrifices?" And then that ſentence, "The anger of heaven is terrible." When he is in danger afterwards, he is ſaved by the heavenly aſſiſtance of two deities at once, and his wounds cured in the holy temple of Pergamus by Latona and Diana. As to his valour, he is ſecond only to Hector, and in perſonal bravery as great in the Greek author as in the Roman. He is made to exert himſelf on emergencies of the firſt importance and hazard, rather than on common occaſions: he checks Diomed here in the midſt of his fury; in the thirteenth book defends his friend Diephobus before it was his turn to fight, being placed in one of the hindmoſt ranks (which Homer, to take off all objections to his valour, tells us happened becauſe Priam had an animoſity to him, though he was one of the braveſt of the army.) He is one of thoſe who reſcue Hector when he is overthrown by Ajax in the fourteenth book. And what alone were ſufficient to eſtabliſh him a firſt-rate hero, he is the firſt that dares reſiſt Achilles himſelf at his return to the fight in all his rage for the loſs of Patroclus. He indeed avoids encountering two at once in the preſent book; and ſhews, upon the whole, a ſedate and deliberate courage, which if not ſo glaring as that of ſome others, is yet more juſt.

Thy matchleſs ſkill, thy yet-unrival'd fame,
And boaſted glory of the Lycian name?
Oh pierce that mortal! if we mortal call
That wond'rous force by which whole armies fall:
Or God incens'd, who quits the diſtant ſkies
To puniſh Troy for ſlighted ſacrifice;
(Which oh avert from our unhappy ſtate!
For what ſo dreadful as celeſtial hate?)
Whoe'er he be, propitiate Jove with pray'r;
If man, deſtroy; if God, intreat to ſpare.
To him the Lycian. Whom your eyes behold,
If right I judge, is Diomede the bold.
Such courſes whirl him o'er the duſty field,
So tow'rs his helmet, and ſo flames his ſhield.
If 'tis a God, he wears that chief's diſguiſe;
Or if that chief, ſome guardian of the ſkies
Involv'd in clouds, protects him in the fray,
And turns unſeen the fruſtrate dart away.
I wing'd an arrow, which not idly fell,
The ſtroke had fix'd him to the gates of hell,
And, but ſome God, ſome angry God withſtands,
His fate was due to theſe unerring hands.
Skill'd in the bow, on foot I fought the war,
Nor join'd ſwift horſes to the rapid car.

Ver. 242. *Skill'd in the bow.* &c.] We ſee through this whole diſcourſe of Pandarus the character of a vain-glorious paſſionate prince, who being ſkilled in the uſe of the bow, was highly valued by himſelf and others for this excellence: but having been ſucceſsleſs in two different trials of ſkill, he is raiſed into an outragious paſſion, which vents itſelf in vain threats on his guiltleſs bow. Euſtathius on this paſſage relates a ſtory of a Paphlagonian famous like him for his archery, who having miſſed his aim at repeated trials, was ſo tranſported by rage, that breaking his bow and arrows, he executed a more fatal vengeance by hanging himſelf.

Ten

Ten poliſh'd chariots I poſſeſs'd at home,
And ſtill they grace Lycaon's princely dome:
There veil'd in ſpacious coverlets they ſtand;
And twice ten courſers wait their lord's command.
The good old warrior bade me truſt to theſe,
When firſt for Troy I ſail'd the ſacred ſeas;
In fields, aloft, the whirling car to guide,
And thro' the ranks of death triumphant ride.
But vain with youth, and yet to thrift inclin'd,
I heard his counſels with unheedful mind,
And thought the ſteeds (your large ſupplies unknown)
Might fail of forage in the ſtraiten'd town:
So took my bow and pointed darts in hand,
And left the chariots in my native land.
Too late, O friend! my raſhneſs I deplore;
Theſe ſhafts, once fatal, carry death no more.
Tydeus' and Atreus' ſons their points have found,
And undiſſembled gore purſu'd the wound.
In vain they bled: This unavailing bow
Serves, not to ſlaughter, but provoke the foe.
In evil hour theſe bended horns I ſtrung,
And ſeiz'd the quiver where it idly hung.
Curs'd be the fate that ſent me to the field,
Without a warrior's arms, the ſpear and ſhield!

Ver. 244. *Ten poliſh'd chariots.*] Among the many pictures Homer gives us of the ſimplicity of the heroic ages, he mingles from time to time ſome hints of an extraordinary magnificence. We have here a prince who has all theſe chariots for pleaſure at one time, with their particular ſets of horſes to each, and the moſt ſumptuous coverings in their ſtables. But we muſt remember, that he ſpeaks of an Aſiatic prince, thoſe Barbarians living in great luxury. Dacier.

Ver. 252. *Yet to thrift inclin'd.*] It is Euſtathius's remark, that Pandarus did this out of avarice, to ſave the expence of his horſes. I like this conjecture, becauſe nothing ſeems more jucious, than to give a man of a perfidious character a ſtrong tincture of avarice.

If e'er with life I quit the Trojan plain,
If e'er I ſee my ſpouſe and ſire again,
This bow, unfaithful to my glorious aims,
Broke by my hand, ſhall feed the blazing flames.
To whom the leader of the Dardan race:
Be calm, nor Phœbus' honour'd gift diſgrace.
The diſtant dart be prais'd, tho' here we need
The ruſhing chariot, and the bounding ſteed.
Againſt yon hero let us bend our courſe.
And, hand to hand, encounter force with force.
Now mount my ſeat, and from the chariot's height
Obſerve my father's ſteeds, renown'd in fight;
Practis'd alike to turn, to ſtop, to chace,
To dare the ſhock, or urge the rapid race:
Secure with theſe, thro' fighting fields we go,
Or ſafe to Troy, if Jove aſſiſt the foe.
Haſte, ſeize the whip, and ſnatch the guiding rein:
The warrior's fury let this arm ſuſtain;
Or if to combat thy bold heart incline,
Take thou the ſpear, the chariot's care be mine.
O prince! (Lycaon's valiant ſon reply'd)
As thine the ſteeds, be thine the taſk to guide.
The horſes practis'd to their lord's command,
Shall bear the rein, and anſwer to thy hand.
But if unhappy, we deſert the fight,
Thy voice alone can animate their flight:
Elſe ſhall our fates be number'd with the dead,
And theſe, the victor's prize, in triumph led.
Thine be the guidance then: with ſpear and ſhield
Myſelf will charge this terror of the field.
And now both heroes mount the glitt'ring car;
The bounding courſers ruſh amidſt the war.

Ver. 273. *Nor Phœbus' honour'd gift diſgrace.*] For Homer tells us in the ſecond book, ver. 334. of the catalogue, that the bow and ſhafts of Pandarus were given him by Apollo.

Their

Their fierce approach bold Sthenelus eſpy'd,
Who thus, alarm'd, to great Tydides cry'd.
O friend! two chiefs of force immenſe I ſee,
Dreadful they come, and bend their rage on thee:
Lo the brave heir of old Lycaon's line,
And great Æneas, ſprung from race divine!
Enough is giv'n to fame. Aſcend thy car;
And ſave a life, the bulwark of our war.
At this the hero caſt a gloomy look,
Fix'd on the chief with ſcorn, and thus he ſpoke.
Me doſt thou bid to ſhun the coming fight?
Me wouldſt thou move to baſe, inglorious flight?
Know, 'tis not honeſt in my ſoul to fear,
Nor was Tydides born to tremble here.
I hate the cumbrous chariot's ſlow advance,
And the long diſtance of the flying lance;
But while my nerves are ſtrong, my force intire,
Thus front the foe, and emulate my ſire.
Nor ſhall yon ſteeds that fierce to fight convey
Thoſe threatning heroes, bear them both away;
One chief at leaſt beneath this arm ſhall die;
So Pallas tells me, and forbids to fly.
But if ſhe dooms, and if no God withſtand,
That both ſhall fall by one victorious hand;
Then heed my words: my horſes here detain,
Fix'd to the chariot by the ſtraiten'd rein;

Ver. 520. *One chief at leaſt beneath this arm ſhall die.*] It is the manner of our author to make his perſons have ſome intimation from within, either of proſperous or adverſe fortune, before it happens to them. In the preſent inſtance, we have ſeen Æneas aſtoniſhed at the great exploits of Diomed, propoſing to himſelf the means of his eſcape by the ſwiftneſs of his horſes, before he advances to encounter him. On the other hand, Diomed is ſo filled with aſſurance, that he gives orders here to Sthenelus to ſeize thoſe horſes, before they come up to him. The oppoſition of theſe two (as Madam Dacier has remarked) is very obſervable.

Swift to Æneas' empty ſeat proceed,
And ſeize the courſers of ætherial breed.
The race of thoſe, which once the thund'ring God
For raviſh'd Ganymede on Tros beſtow'd,
The beſt that e'er on earth's broad ſurface run,
Beneath the riſing or the ſetting ſun.
Hence great Anchiſes ſtole a breed, unknown,
By mortal mares, from fierce Laomedon:
Four of this race his ample ſtalls contain,
And two tranſport Æneas o'er the plain.
Theſe, were the rich immortal prize our own,
Thro' the wide world ſhould make our glory known.
Thus while they ſpoke, the foe came furious on,
And ſtern Lycaon's warlike race begun.
Prince, thou art met. Tho' late in vain aſſail'd,
The ſpear may enter where the arrow fail'd.
He ſaid, then ſhook the pond'rous lance, and flung,
On his broad ſhield the ſounding weapon rung,
Pierce'd the tough orb, and in his cuiraſs hung.
He bleeds! the pride of Greece! (the boaſter cries)
Our triumph now, the mighty warrior lies!
Miſtaken vaunter! Diomede reply'd;
Thy dart has err'd, and now my ſpear be try'd:
Ye 'ſcape not both; one, headlong from his car,
With hoſtile blood ſhall glut the God of war.
He ſpoke, and riſing hurl'd his forceful dart,
Which driv'n by Pallas, pierce'd a vital part;

Ver. 327. *The courſers of ætherial breed.*] We have already obſerved the great delight Homer takes in horſes, as well as heroes, of celeſtial race: and if he has been thought too fond of the genealogies of ſome of his warriors, in relating them even in a battle; we find him here as willing to trace that of his horſes in the ſame circumſtance. Theſe were of that breed which Jupiter beſtowed upon Tros, and far ſuperior to the common ſtrain of Trojan horſes.

Full

Full in his face it enter'd, and betwixt
The noſe and eye-ball the proud Lycian fixt;
Craſh'd all his jaws, and cleft the tongue within,
Till the bright point look'd out beneath the chin.
Headlong he falls, his helmet knocks the ground;
Earth groans beneath him, and his arms reſound;
The ſtarting courſers tremble with affright;
The ſoul indignant ſeeks the realms of night.
To guard his ſlaughter'd friend, Æneas flies,
His ſpear extending where the carcaſe lies;
Watchful he wheels, protects it ev'ry way,
As the grim lion ſtalks around his prey.
O'er the fall'n trunk his ample ſhield diſplay'd,
He hides the hero with his mighty ſhade,
And threats aloud: The Greeks with longing eyes
Behold at diſtance, but forbear the prize.
Then fierce Tydides ſtoops; and from the fields
Heav'd with vaſt force, a rocky fragment wields.
Not two ſtrong men th' enormous weight could raiſe,
Such men as live in theſe degen'rate days.

He

Ver. 353. *Full in his face it enter'd*] It has been aſked, how Diomed, being on foot, could naturally be ſuppoſed to give ſuch a wound as is deſcribed here. Were it never ſo improbable, the expreſs mention that Minerva conducted the javelin to that part, would render this paſſage unexceptionable. But without having recourſe to a miracle, ſuch a wound might be received by Pandarus, either if he ſtooped, or if his enemy took the advantage of a riſing ground, by which means he might not impoſſibly ſtand higher, though the other were in a chariot. This is the ſolution given by the ancient Scholia, which is confirmed by the lowneſs of the chariots, obſerv'd in the Eſſay on Homer's Battles.

Ver. 361. *To guard his ſlaughter'd friend Æneas flies.*] This protecting of the dead body was not only an office of piety agreeable to the character of Æneas in particular, but looked upon as a matter of great importance in thoſe times. It was believed that the very ſoul of the deceaſed ſuffered by the body's remaining deſtitute of the rites of ſepulture, as not being elſe admitted to paſs the waters of Styx.

Ver. 371. *Not two ſtrong men.*] This opinion of a degeneracy

of

He ſwung it round; and gath'ring ſtrength to throw,
Diſcharge'd the pond'rous ruin at the foe.
Where to the hip th' inſerted thigh unites,
Full on the bone the pointed marble lights;
Thro' both the tendons broke the rugged ſtone,
And ſtripp'd the ſkin, and crack'd the ſolid bone.
Sunk on his knees, and ſtagg'ring with his pains,
His falling bulk his bended arm ſuſtains;
Loſt in a dizzy miſt the warrior lies;
A ſudden cloud comes ſwimming o'er his eyes.
There the brave chief who mighty numbers ſway'd,
Oppreſs'd had ſunk to death's eternal ſhade;
But heav'nly Venus, mindful of the love
She bore Anchiſes in th' Idæan grove,
His danger views with anguiſh and deſpair,
And guards her offspring with a mother's care.
About her much-lov'd ſon her arms ſhe throws,
Her arms whoſe whiteneſs match the falling ſnows.
Screen'd from the foe behind her ſhining veil,
The ſwords wave harmleſs, and the jav'lins fail:
Safe thro' the ruſhing horſe, and feather'd flight
Of ſounding ſhafts, ſhe bears him from the fight.

of human ſize and ſtrength in the proceſs of ages, has been very general. The active life, and temperance of the firſt men, before their native powers were prejudiced by luxury, may be ſuppoſed to have given them this advantage. Celſus, in his firſt book, obſerves, that Homer mentions no ſort of diſeaſes in the old heroic times but what are immediately inflicted by heaven, as if their temperance and exerciſe preſerved them from all beſides.

Ver. 591. *Screen'd from the foe behind her ſhining veil.*] Homer ſays, ſhe ſpread her veil that it might be a defence againſt the darts. How comes it then afterwards to be pierced through, when Venus is wounded? It is manifeſt the veil was not impenetrable, and is ſaid here to be a defence only as it rendered Æneas inviſible, by being interpoſed. This is the obſervation of Euſtathius, and was thought too material to be neglected in the tranſlation.

Nor

Nor Sthenelus, with unaſſiſting hands,
Remain'd unheedful of his lord's commands;
His panting ſteeds, remov'd from out the war,
He fix'd with ſtraiten'd traces to the car.
Next ruſhing to the Dardan ſpoil, detains
The heav'nly courſers with the flowing manes:
Theſe in proud triumph to the fleet convey'd,
No longer now a Trojan lord obey'd.
That charge to bold Deipylus he gave,
(Whom moſt he lov'd, as brave men love the brave)
Then mounting on his car, reſum'd the rein,
And follow'd where Tydides ſwept the plain.
Meanwhile (his conqueſt raviſh'd from his eyes)
The raging chief in chace of Venus flies:
No goddeſs ſhe commiſſion'd to the field,
Like Pallas dreadful with her ſable ſhield,
Or fierce Bellona thund'ring at the wall,
While flames aſcend, and mighty ruins fall;
He knew ſoft combats ſuit the tender dame,
New to the field, and ſtill a foe to fame.
Thro' breaking ranks his furious courſe he bends,
And at the Goddeſs his broad lance extends;
Thro' her bright veil the daring weapon drove,
Th' ambroſial veil, which all the Graces wove;
Her ſnowy hand the razing ſteel profan'd,
And the tranſparent ſkin with crimſon ſtain'd.
From the clear vein a ſtream immortal flow'd,
Such ſtream as iſſues from a wounded God:

Ver. 408. *The chief in chace of Venus flies.*] We have ſeen with what eaſe Venus takes Paris out of the battle in the third book, when his life was in danger from Menelaus; but here when ſhe has a charge of more importance and nearer concern, ſhe is not able to preſerve herſelf or her ſon from the fury of Diomed. The difference of ſucceſs in two attempts ſo like each other, is occaſioned by that penetration of ſight with which Pallas had endued her favourite.

Pure

Pure emanation! uncorrupted flood;
Unlike our groſs, diſeas'd, terreſtrial blood:
(For not the bread of man their life ſuſtains,
Nor wine's inflaming juice ſupplies their veins.)
With tender ſhrieks the Goddeſs fill'd the place,
And dropt her offspring from her weak embrace.
Him Phœbus took: he caſts a cloud around
The fainting chief, and wards the mortal wound.
Then with a voice that ſhook the vaulted ſkies,
The king inſults the Goddeſs as ſhe flies.
Ill with Jove's daughter bloody fights agree,
The field of combat is no ſcene for thee:
Go, let thy own ſoft ſex employ thy care,
Go lull the coward, or delude the fair.
Taught by this ſtroke, renounce the war's alarms,
And learn to tremble at the name of arms.
Tydides thus. The Goddeſs, ſeiz'd with dread,
Confus'd, diſtracted, from the conflict fled.
To aid her, ſwift the winged iris flew,
Wrapt in a miſt above the warring crew.
The Queen of love with faded charms ſhe found,
Pale was her cheek, and livid look'd the wound.
To Mars, who ſat remote, they bent their way;
Far on the left, with clouds involv'd he lay;
Beſide him ſtood his lance, diſtain'd with gore,
And, rein'd with gold, his foaming ſteeds before.

Ver. 424. *Unlike our groſs, diſeas'd, terreſtrial blood,* &c.] The opinion of the incorruptibility of celeſtial matter ſeems to have been received in the time of Homer. For he makes the immortality of the gods to depend upon the incorruptible nature of the nutriment by which they are ſuſtained; as the mortality of men to proceed from the corruptible materials of which they are made, and by which they are nouriſhed. We have ſeveral inſtances in him from whence this may be inferred, as when Diomed queſtions Glaucus, if he be a god or mortal, he adds, *One who is ſuſtained by the fruits of the earth.* Lib. 6. ver. 175.

Low

Low at his knee ſhe begg'd, with ſtreaming eyes,
Her brother's car, to mount the diſtant ſkies,
And ſhew'd the wound by fierce Tydides giv'n,
A mortal man, who dares encounter Heav'n.
Stern Mars attentive hears the Queen complain,
And to her hand commits the golden rein;
She mounts the ſeat oppreſs'd with ſilent woe,
Driv'n by the Goddeſs of the painted bow.
The laſh reſounds, the rapid chariot flies,
And in a moment ſcales the lofty ſkies.
There ſtopp'd the car, and there the courſers ſtood,
Fed by fair Iris with ambroſial food,
Before her mother Love's bright Queen appears,
O'erwhelm'd with anguiſh and diſſolv'd in tears;
She rais'd her in her arms, beheld her bleed,
And aſk'd, what God had wrought this guilty deed?
Then ſhe; This inſult from no God I found,
An impious mortal gave the daring wound!
Behold the deed of haughty Diomede!
'Twas in the ſon's defence the mother bled.
The war with Troy no more the Grecians wage;
But with the Gods (th' immortal Gods) engage.
Dione then. Thy wrongs with patience bear,
And ſhare thoſe griefs inferior pow'rs muſt ſhare:
Unnumber'd woes mankind from us ſuſtain,
And men with woes afflict the Gods again.
The mighty Mars in mortal fetters bound,
And lodg'd in brazen dungeons under ground,

Ver. 472. *And ſhare thoſe griefs inferior pow'rs muſt ſhare.*] The word *inferior* is added by the tranſlator, to open the diſtinction Homer makes between the divinity itſelf, which he repreſents impaſſible, and the ſubordinate celeſtial beings or ſpirits.

Ver. 475. *The mighty Mars, &c.*] Homer in theſe fables, as upon many other occaſions, makes a great ſhow of his theological learning, which was the manner of all the Greeks who had travelled into Egypt.

Full

Full thirteen moons impriſon'd roar'd in vain;
Otus and Ephialtes held the chain:
Perhaps had periſh'd; had not Hermes' care
Reſtor'd the groaning God to upper air.
Great Juno's ſelf has borne her weight of pain,
Th' imperial partner of the heav'nly reign;
Amphitryon's ſon infix'd the deadly dart,
And fill'd with anguiſh her immortal heart.
Ev'n hell's grim king Alcides' power confeſt,
The ſhaft found entrance in his iron breaſt;
To Jove's high palace for a cure he fled,
Pierce'd in his own dominions of the dead;
Where Pæon ſprinkling heav'nly balm around,
Aſſuage'd the glowing pangs, and clos'd the wound.
Raſh, impious man! to ſtain the bleſt abodes,
And drench his arrows in the blood of Gods!
But thou (tho' Pallas urge'd thy frantic deed)
Whoſe ſpear ill-fated makes a Goddeſs bleed,
Know thou, whoe'er with heav'nly pow'r contends,
Short is his date, and ſoon his glory ends;
From fields of death when late he ſhall retire,
No infant on his knees ſhall call him ſire.
Strong as thou art, ſome God may yet be found,
To ſtretch thee pale and gaſping on the ground;

Ver. 498. *No infant on his knees ſhall call him ſire.*] This is Homer's manner of foretelling that he ſhall periſh unfortunately in battle, which is infinitely a more artful way of conveying that thought than by a direct expreſſion. He does not ſimply ſay, he ſhall never return from the war, but intimates as much by deſcribing the loſs of the moſt ſenſible and affecting pleaſure that a warrior can receive at his return. Of the like nature is the prophecy at the end of this ſpeech of the hero's death, by repreſenting it in a dream of his wife's. There are many fine ſtrokes of this kind in the prophetical parts of the Old Teſtament. Nothing is more natural than Dione's forming theſe images of revenge upon Diomed, the hope of which vengeance was ſo proper a topic of conſolation to Venus.

Thy

Thy diſtant wife, Ægiale the fair,
Starting from ſleep with a diſtracted air,
Shall rouſe thy ſlaves, and her loſt lord deplore,
The brave, the great, the glorious now no more!
This ſaid, ſhe wip'd from Venus' wounded palm
The ſacred ichor, and infus'd the balm.
Juno and Pallas with a ſmile ſurvey'd,
And thus to Jove began the blue-ey'd maid.
Permit thy daughter, gracious Jove! to tell
How this miſchance the Cyprian queen befel.
As late ſhe try'd with paſſion to inflame
The tender boſom of a Grecian dame,
Allur'd the fair with moving thoughts of joy,
To quit her country for ſome youth of Troy;
The claſping zone, with golden buckles bound,
Raz'd her ſoft hand with this lamented wound.
The Sire of Gods and men ſuperior ſmil'd,
And, calling Venus, thus addreſt his child.

Not

Ver. 501. *Thy diſtant wife.*] The poet ſeems here to complement the fair ſex at the expence of truth, by concealing the character of Ægiale, whom he has deſcribed with the diſpoſition of a faithful wife; though the hiſtory of thoſe times repreſents her as an abandoned proſtitute, who gave up her own perſon and her huſband's crown to her lover. So that Diomed at his return from Troy, when he expected to be received with all the tenderneſs of a loving ſpouſe, found his throne and bed poſſeſſed by an adulterer, was forced to fly his country, and ſeek refuge and ſubſiſtence in foreign lands. Thus the offended goddeſs executed her vengeance by the proper effects of her own power, by involving the hero in a ſeries of misfortunes proceeding from the incontinence of his wife.

Ver. 517. *The ſire of gods and men ſuperior ſmil'd.*] One may obſerve the decorum and decency our author conſtantly preſerves on this occaſion; Jupiter only *ſmiles*, the other gods *laugh out*. That Homer was no enemy to mirth, may appear from ſeveral places of his poem; which, ſo ſerious as it is, is interſperſed with many gayeties, indeed more than he has been followed in by the

Not theſe, O daughter, are thy proper cares,
Thee milder arts befit, and ſofter wars;
Sweet ſmiles are thine, and kind endearing charms,
To Mars and Pallas leave the deeds of arms.

Thus they in heav'n: While on the plain below
The fierce Tydides charg'd his Dardan foe,
Fluſh'd with celeſtial blood purſu'd his way,
And fearleſs dar'd the threatning God of day;
Already in his hopes he ſaw him kill'd,
Tho' ſcreen'd behind Apollo's mighty ſhield.
Thrice ruſhing furious, at the chief he ſtrook;
His blazing buckler thrice Apollo ſhook;
He try'd the fourth: when breaking from the cloud,
A more than mortal voice was heard aloud.

O ſon of Tydeus, ceaſe! be wiſe, and ſee
How vaſt the diff'rence of the Gods and thee;
Diſtance immenſe! between the pow'rs that ſhine
Above, eternal, deathleſs, and divine,
And mortal man! a wretch of humble birth,
A ſhort-liv'd reptile in the duſt of earth.

So ſpoke the God who darts celeſtial fires;
He dreads his fury, and ſome ſteps retires.

Then

ſucceeding epic poets. Milton, who was perhaps fonder of him than the reſt, has given moſt into the ludicrous; of which his *Paradiſe of fools*, in the third book, and his *Jeſting angels*, in the ſixth, are extraordinary inſtances. Upon the confuſion of Babel, he ſays, there was *great laughter in heaven:* as Homer calls the laughter of the gods in the firſt book, an *inextinguiſhable laugh:* but the ſcripture might perhaps embolden the Engliſh poet, which ſays, *The Lord ſhall laugh them to ſcorn*, and the like. Plato is very angry at Homer for making the deities laugh, as a high indecency and offence to gravity.

Ver. 540. *He dreads his fury, and ſome ſteps retires.*] Diomede ſtill maintains his intrepid character; he retires but a ſtep or two even from Apollo. The conduct of Homer is remarkably juſt and rational here. He gives Diomede no ſort of advantage over Apol-

lo,

Then Phœbus bore the chief of Venus' race
To Troy's high fane, and to his holy place;
Latona there and Phœbe heal'd the wound,
With vigour arm'd him, and with glory crown'd.
This done, the patron of the ſilver bow
A phantom rais'd, the ſame in ſhape and ſhow
With great Æneas; ſuch the form he bore,
And ſuch in fight the radiant arms he wore.
Around the ſpectre bloody wars are wage'd,
And Greece and Troy with claſhing ſhields engage'd.
Meantime on Ilion's tow'r Apollo ſtood,
And calling Mars, thus urge'd the raging God.
Stern pow'r of arms, by whom the mighty fall,
Who bathe in blood, and ſhake th' embattel'd wall,
Riſe in thy wrath! to hell's abhorr'd abodes
Diſpatch yon Greek, and vindicate the Gods.
Firſt roſy Venus felt his brutal rage;
Me next he charge'd, and dares all Heav'n engage:
The wretch would brave high Heav'n's immortal Sire,
His triple thunder, and his bolts of fire.

lo, becauſe he would not feign what was entirely incredible, and what no allegory could juſtify. He wounds Venus and Mars, as it is morally poſſible to overcome the irregular paſſions which are repreſented by thoſe deities. But it is impoſſible to vanquiſh Apollo, in whatſoever capacity he is conſidered, either as the Sun, or as Deſtiny; one may ſhoot at the ſun, but not hurt him; and one may ſtrive againſt deſtiny, but not ſurmount it. Euſtathius.

Ver. 546. *A phantom rais'd.*] The fiction of a god's placing a phantom inſtead of the hero, to delude the enemy and continue the engagement, means no more than that the enemy thought he was in the battle. This is the language of poetry, which prefers a marvellous fiction to a plain and ſimple truth, the recital whereof would be cold and unaffecting. Thus Minerva's guiding a javelin, ſignifies only that it was thrown with art and dexterity; Mars taking upon him the ſhape of Acamas, that the courage of Acamas incited him to do ſo, and in like manner of the reſt.

The God of battle iſſues on the plain,
Stirs all the ranks, and fires the Trojan train;
In form like Acamas, the Thracian guide,
Enrage'd, to Troy's retiring chiefs he cry'd:
How long, ye ſons of Priam! will ye fly,
And unrevenge'd ſee Priam's people die?
Still unreſiſted ſhall the foe deſtroy,
And ſtretch the ſlaughter to the gates of Troy?
Lo brave Æneas ſinks beneath his wound,
Not Godlike Hector more in arms renown'd:
Haſte all, and take the gen'rous warrior's part,
He ſaid; new courage ſwell'd each hero's heart.
Sarpedon firſt his ardent ſoul expreſs'd,
And, turn'd to Hector, theſe bold words addreſs'd.
Say, chief, is all thy ancient valour loſt,
Where are thy threats, and where thy glorious boaſt,
That propt alone by Priam's race ſhould ſtand
Troy's ſacred walls, nor need a foreign hand?
Now, now thy country calls her wanted friends,
And the proud vaunt in juſt deriſion ends.
Remote they ſtand, while alien troops engage,
Like trembling hounds before the lion's rage.

Ver. 375. *The ſpeech of Sarpedon to Hector.*] It will be hard to find a ſpeech more warm and ſpirited than this of Sarpedon, or which comprehends ſo much in ſo few words. Nothing could be more artfully thought upon to picque Hector, who was ſo jealous of his country's glory, than to tell him he had formerly conceived too great a notion of the Trojan valour; and to exalt the auxiliaries above his countrymen. The deſcription Sarpedon gives of the little concern or intereſt himſelf had in the war, in oppoſition to neceſſity and imminent danger of the Trojans, greatly ſtrengthens this preference, and lays the charge very home upon their honour. In the latter part, which preſcribes Hector his duty, there is a particular reprimand, in telling him how much it behoves him to animate and encourage the auxiliaries; for this is to ſay, in other words, you ſhould exhort them, and they are forced on the contrary to exhort you.

Far

Far diſtant hence I held my wide command,
Where foaming Xanthus laves the Lycian land,
With ample wealth (the wiſh of mortals) bleſt,
A beauteous wife, and infant at her breaſt;
With thoſe I left whatever dear could be;
Greece, if ſhe conquers, nothing wins from me.
Yet firſt in fight my Lycian bands I chear,
And long to meet this mighty man ye fear.
While Hector idle ſtands, nor bids the brave
Their wives, their infants, and their altars ſave.
Haſte, warrior, haſte! preſerve thy threaten'd ſtate;
Or one vaſt burſt of all-involving fate
Full o'er your tow'rs ſhall fall, and ſweep away
Sons, ſires, and wives, an undiſtinguiſh'd prey.
Rouze all thy Trojans, urge thy aids to fight;
Theſe claim thy thoughts by day, thy watch by night;
With force inceſſant the brave Greeks oppoſe;
Such cares thy friends deſerve, and ſuch thy foes.

Stung to the heart the gen'rous Hector hears,
But juſt reproof with decent ſilence bears.
From his proud car the prince impetuous ſprings;
On earth he leaps; his brazen armour rings.
Two ſhining ſpears are brandiſh'd in his hands;
Thus arm'd, he animates his drooping bands,
Revives their ardour, turns their ſteps from flight,
And wakes anew the dying flames of fight.
They turn, they ſtand: the Greeks their fury dare,
Condenſe their pow'rs, and wait the growing war.

As when, on Ceres' ſacred floor, the ſwain
Spreads the wide fan to clear the golden grain,

Ver. 611. *Ceres' ſacred floor.*] Homer calls the threſhing floor *ſacred* (ſays Euſtathius) not only as it was conſecratted to Ceres, but in regard of its great uſe and advantage to human-kind; in which ſenſe alſo he frequently gives the ſame epithet to *cities*, &c. This ſimile is of an exquiſite beauty.

And the light chaff, before the breezes born,
Aſcends in clouds from off the heapy corn;
The grey duſt, riſing with collected winds,
Drives o'er the barn, and whitens all the hinds.
So white with duſt the Grecian hoſt appears,
From trampling ſteeds, and thundring charioteers.
The duſky clouds from labour'd earth ariſe,
And roll in ſmoaking volumes to the ſkies.
Mars hovers o'er them with his ſable ſhield,
And adds new horrors to the darken'd field:
Pleas'd with his charge, and ardent to fulfil
In Troy's defence Apollo's heav'nly will:
Soon as from fight the blue-ey'd maid retires,
Each Trojan boſom with new warmth he fires.
And now the God, from forth his ſacred ſane,
Produce'd Æneas to the ſhouting train;
Alive, unharm'd, with all his peers around,
Erect he ſtood, and vig'rous from his wound:
Inquiries none they made; the dreadful day
No pauſe of words admits, no dull delay;
Fierce Diſcord ſtorms, Apollo loud exclaims,
Fame calls, Mars thunders, and the field's in flames.
Stern Diomede with either Ajax ſtood,
And great Ulyſſes bath'd in hoſtile blood.
Embodied cloſe, the lab'ring Grecian train
The fierceſt ſhock of charging hoſts ſuſtain;
Unmov'd and ſilent, the whole war they wait,
Serenely dreadful, and as fix'd as fate.
So when th' embattel'd clouds in dark array
Along the ſkies their gloomy lines diſplay,

When

Ver. 641. *So when th' embattl'd clouds.*] This ſimile contains as proper a compariſon, and as fine a picture of nature as any in Homer: however it is to be feared the beauty and propriety of it will not be very obvious to many readers, becauſe it is the deſcription of a natural appearance which they have not had an opportunity to remark

When now the North his boiſt'rous rage has ſpent,
And peaceful ſleeps the liquid element,
The low-hung vapours, motionleſs and ſtill,
Reſt on the ſummits of the ſhaded hill;
Till the maſs ſcatters as the winds ariſe,
Diſpers'd and broken thro' the ruffled ſkies.
Nor was the gen'ral wanting to his train,
From troop to troop he toils thro' all the plain.
Ye Greeks, be men! the charge of battle bear;
Your brave aſſociates, and yourſelves revere!

Let

remark, and which can be obſerved only in a mountainous country. It happens frequently, in very calm weather, that the atmoſphere is charged with thick vapours, whoſe gravity is ſuch that they neither riſe nor fall, but remain poized in the air at a certain height, where they continue frequently for ſeveral days together. In a plain country this occaſions no other viſible appearance, but of an uniform cloudy ſky; but in a hilly region, theſe vapours are to be ſeen covering the tops, and ſtretched along the ſides of the mountains; the clouded parts above being terminated and diſtinguiſhed from the clear parts below by a ſtrait line running parallel to the horizon, as far as the mountains extend. The whole compaſs of nature cannot afford a nobler and more exact repreſentation of a numerous army, drawn up in line of battle, and expecting the charge. The long-extended even front, the cloſeneſs of the ranks, the firmneſs, order, and ſilence of the whole, are all drawn with great reſemblance in this one compariſon.

Ver. 651. *Ye Greeks, be men,* &c.] If Homer in the longer ſpeeches of the Iliad, ſays all that could be ſaid by eloquence, in the ſhorter he ſays all that can be ſaid with judgment. Whatever ſome few modern critics have thought, it will be found, upon due reflection, that the length or brevity of his ſpeeches is determined as the occaſions either allow leiſure or demand haſte. This conciſe oration of Agamemnon is a maſter-piece in the Laconic way. The exigence required he ſhould ſay ſomething very powerful, and no time was to be loſt. He therefore warms the brave and the timorous by one and the ſame exhortation, which at once moves by the love of glory, and the fear of death. It is ſhort and full,

like

Let glorious acts more glorious acts inſpire,
And catch from breaſt to breaſt the noble fire!
On valour's ſide the odds of combat lie,
The brave live glorious, or lamented die;
The wretch who trembles in the field of fame,
Meets death, and worſe than death, eternal ſhame.
Theſe words he ſeconds with his flying lance,
To meet whoſe point was ſtrong Deicoon's chance;
Æneas' friend, and in his native place
Honour'd and lov'd like Priam's royal race:
Long had he fought the foremoſt in the field;
But now the monarch's lance tranſpierce'd his ſhield:
His ſhield too weak the furious dart to ſtay,
Thro' his broad belt the weapon force'd its way;
The grizly wound diſmiſs'd his ſoul to hell,
His arms around him rattled as he fell.
Then fierce Æneas brandiſhing his blade,
In duſt Orſilochus and Crethon laid,
Whoſe ſire Diocleus, wealthy, brave, and great,
In well-built Pheræ held his lofy ſeat:
Sprung from Alpheus, plenteous ſtream! that yields
Increaſe of harveſts to the Pylian fields.
He got Orſilochus, Diocleus he,
And theſe deſcended in the third degree.
Too early expert in the martial toil,
In ſable ſhips they left their native ſoil,

like that of the brave Scotch general under Guſtavus, who, upon ſight of the enemy, ſaid only this, *See ye thoſe lads? Either fell them, or they will fell you.*

Ver. 652. *Your brave aſſociates, and yourſelves revere.*] This noble exhortation of Agamemnon is correſpondent to the wiſe ſcheme of Neſtor in the ſecond book: where he adviſed to rank the ſoldiers of the ſame nation together, that being known to each other, all might be incited either by a generous emulation or a decent ſhame. Spondanus.

T' avenge

T' avenge Atrides: now, untimely ſlain,
They fell with glory on the Phrygian plain.
So two young mountain-lions, nurs'd with blood
In deep receſſes of the gloomy wood,
Ruſh fearleſs to the plains, and uncontroul'd
Depopulate the ſtalls and waſte the fold;
Till pierce'd at diſtance from their native den,
O'erpower'd they fall beneath the force of men.
Proſtrate on earth their beauteous bodies lay,
Like mountain firs, as tall and ſtrait as they.
Great Menelaus views with pitying eyes,
Lifts his bright lance, and at the victor flies;
Mars urge'd him on; yet, ruthleſs in his hate,
The God but urge'd him to provoke his fate.
He thus advancing, Neſtor's valiant ſon
Shakes for his danger, and neglects his own;
Struck with the thought, ſhould Helen's lord be ſlain,
And all his country's glorious labours vain.
Already met the threat'ning heroes ſtand;
The ſpears already tremble in their hand:
In ruſh'd Antilochus, his aid to bring,
And fall or conquer by the Spartan king.
Theſe ſeen, the Dardan backward turn'd his courſe,
Brave as he was, and ſhunn'd unequal force.
The breathleſs bodies to the Greeks they drew;
Then mix in combat, and their toils renew.
First Pylæmenes, great in battle, bled,
Who ſheath'd in braſs the Paphlagonians led.
Atrides mark'd him where ſublime he ſtood;
Fix'd in his throat, the jav'lin drank his blood.

Ver. 696. *And all his country's glorious labours vain.*] For (as Agamemnon ſaid in the fourth book upon Menelaus's being wounded) if he were ſlain, the war would be at an end, and the Greeks think only of returning to their country. Spondanus.

The

The faithful Mydon, as he turn'd from fight
His flying courſers, ſunk to endleſs night:
A broken rock by Neſtor's ſon was thrown;
His bended arm receiv'd the falling ſtone,
From his numb'd hand the iv'ry-ſtudded reins,
Dropt in the duſt, are trail'd along the plains:
Meanwhile his temples feel a deadly wound;
He groans in death, and pond'rous ſinks to ground:
Deep drove his helmet in the ſands, and there
The head ſtood fix'd, the quiv'ring legs in air:
Till trampled flat beneath the courſers feet
The youthful victor mounts his empty ſeat,
And bears the prize in triumph to the fleet.

Great Hector ſaw, and raging at the view,
Pours on the Greeks: the Trojan troops purſue:
He fires his hoſt with animating cries,
And brings along the furies of the ſkies.
Mars, ſtern deſtroyer! and Bellona dread,
Flame in the front, and thunder at their head;
This ſwells the tumult and the rage of fight;
That ſhakes a ſpear that caſts a dreadful light;
Where Hector march'd, the God of battles ſhin'd,
Now ſtorm'd before him, and now rage'd behind.

Tydides paus'd amidſt his full career;
Then firſt the hero's manly breaſt knew fear.
As when one ſimple ſwain his cot forſakes,
And wide thro' fens an unknown journey takes;
If chance a ſwelling brook his paſſage ſtay,
And foam impervious croſs the wand'rer's way,

Ver 726. *Mars, ſtern deſtroyer*, &c.] There is a great nobleneſs in this paſſage. With what pomp is Hector introduced into the battle, where Mars and Bellona are his attendants! The retreat of Diomede is no leſs beautiful; Minerva had removed the miſt from his eyes, and he immediately diſcovers Mars aſſiſting Hector. His ſurprize on this occaſion is finely imaged by that of the traveller on the ſudden ſight of the river.

Confus'd

Confus'd he ſtops, a length of country paſt,
Eyes the rough waves, and tir'd, returns at laſt.
Amaz'd no leſs the great Tydides ſtands;
He ſtay'd, and turning, thus addreſs'd his bands.
No wonder, Greeks! that all to Hector yield,
Secure of fav'ring Gods, he takes the field;
His ſtrokes they ſecond, and avert our ſpears:
Behold where Mars in mortal arms appears!
Retire then, warriors, but ſedate and ſlow;
Retire, but with your faces to the foe.
Truſt not too much your unavailing might;
'Tis not with Troy, but with the Gods ye fight.
Now near the Greeks the black battalions drew;
And firſt two leaders valiant Hector ſlew,
His force Anchialus and Mneſthes found,
In ev'ry art of glorious war renown'd;
In the ſame car the chiefs to combat ride,
And fought united, and united dy'd.
Struck at the ſight, the mighty Ajax glows
With thirſt of vengeance, and aſſaults the foes.
His maſſy ſpear with matchleſs fury ſent,
Thro' Amphius' belt and heaving belly went:
Amphius Apæſus' happy ſoil poſſeſt,
With herds abounding, and with treaſure bleſt;
But Fate reſiſtleſs from his country led
The chief, to periſh at his people's head.
Shook with his fall his brazen armour rung,
And fierce, to ſeize it, conqu'ring Ajax ſprung;
Around his head an iron tempeſt rain'd;
A wood of ſpears his ample ſhield ſuſtain'd;
Beneath one foot the yet-warm corps he preſs'd,
And drew his jav'lin from the bleeding breaſt:
He could no more; the ſhow'ring darts deny'd
To ſpoil his glitt'ring arms, and plumy pride.
Now foes on foes came pouring on the fields,
With briſtling lances, and compacted ſhields;

Till

Till in the ſteely circle ſtraiten'd round,
Force'd he gives way, and ſternly quits the ground.
While thus they ſtrive, Tlepolemus the great,
Urge'd by the force of unreſiſted fate,
Burns with deſire Sarpedon's ſtrength to prove;
Alcides' offspring meets the ſon of Jove.
Sheath'd in bright arms each adverſe chief came on,
Jove's great deſcendant, and his greater ſon.
Prepar'd for combat, ere the lance he toſt,
The daring Rhodian vents his haughty boaſt.
What brings this Lycian counſellor ſo far,
To tremble at our arms, not mix in war?
Know thy vain ſelf, nor let their flatt'ry move,
Who ſtyle thee ſon of cloud-compelling Jove.
How far unlike thoſe chiefs of race divine,
How vaſt the diff'rence of their deeds and thine!
Jove got ſuch heroes as my ſire, whoſe ſoul
No fear could daunt, nor earth, nor hell controul.
Troy felt his arm, and yon proud ramparts ſtand
Rais'd on the ruins of his vengeful hand:
With ſix ſmall ſhips, and but a ſlender train,
He left the town, a wide deſerted plain.
But what art thou? who deedleſs look'ſt around,
While unrevenge'd thy Lycians bite the ground:
Small aid to Troy thy feeble force can be,
But wert thou greater, thou muſt yield to me.

Ver. 784. *What brings this Lycian counſellor ſo far.*] There is a particular ſarcaſm in Tlepolemus's calling Sarpedon in this place *Lycian counſellor*, one better ſkilled in oratory than war; as he was the governor of a people who had long been in peace, and probably (if we may gueſs from his character in Homer) remarkable for his ſpeeches. This is rightly obſerved by Spondanus, though not taken notice of by M. Dacier.

Ver. 792. *Troy felt his arm.*] He alludes to the hiſtory of the firſt deſtruction of Troy by Hercules, occaſioned by Laomedon's refuſing that hero the horſes, which were the reward promiſed him for the delivery of his daughter Heſione.

Pierce'd

Pierce'd by my ſpear to endleſs darkneſs go!
I make this preſent to the ſhades below.
The ſon of Hercules, the Rhodian guide,
Thus haughty ſpoke. The Lycian king reply'd.
Thy ſire, O prince! o'erturn'd the Trojan ſtate,
Whoſe perjur'd monarch well deſerv'd his fate;
Thoſe heav'nly ſteeds the hero ſought ſo far,
Falſe he detain'd, the juſt reward of war:
Nor ſo content, the gen'rous chief defy'd,
With baſe reproaches and unmanly pride.
But you, unworthy the high race you boaſt,
Shall raiſe my glory when thy own is loſt:
Now meet thy fate, and by Sarpedon ſlain,
Add one more ghoſt to Pluto's gloomy reign.
He ſaid: both jav'lins at an inſtant flew;
Both ſtruck, both wounded, but Sarpedon's flew:
Full in the boaſter's neck the weapon ſtood,
Transfix'd his throat, and drank the vital blood;
The ſoul diſdainful ſeeks the caves of night,
And his ſeal'd eyes for ever loſe the light.
Yet not in vain, Tlepolemus, was thrown
Thy angry lance; which piercing to the bone
Sarpedon's thigh, had robb'd the chief of breath;
But Jove was preſent, and forbad the death.
Borne from the conflict by his Lycian throng,
The wounded hero dragg'd the lance along.
(His friends, each buſy'd in his ſev'ral part,
Thro' haſte, or danger, had not drawn the dart.)
The Greeks with ſlain Tlepolemus retir'd;
Whoſe fall Ulyſſes view'd, with fury fir'd;
Doubtful if Jove's great ſon he ſhould purſue,
Or pour his vengeance on the Lycian crew.
But Heav'n and Fate the firſt deſign withſtand,
Nor this great death muſt grace Ulyſſes' hand.
Minerva drives him on the Lycian train;
Alaſtor, Cromius, Hallius, ſtrow'd the plain,

Alcander, Prytanis, Noemon fell,
And numbers more his ſword had ſent to hell:
But Hector ſaw; and furious at the ſight,
Ruſh'd terrible amidſt the ranks of fight.
With joy Sarpedon view'd the wiſh'd relief,
And, faint, lamenting, thus implor'd the chief.
Oh ſuffer not the foe to bear away
My helpleſs corps, an unaſſiſted prey;
If I, unbleſt, muſt ſee my ſon no more,
My much lov'd conſort, and my native ſhore,
Yet let me die in Ilion's ſacred wall;
Troy, in whoſe cauſe I fell, ſhall mourn my fall.
He ſaid, nor Hector to the chief replies,
But ſhakes his plume, and fierce to combat flies,
Swift as a whirlwind drives the ſcatt'ring foes,
And dyes the ground with purple as he goes.
Beneath a beech, Jove's conſecrated ſhade,
His mournful friends divine Sarpedon laid:
Brave Pelagon, his fav'rite chief, was nigh,
Who wrench'd the jav'lin from his ſinewy thigh.
The fainting ſoul ſtood ready wing'd for flight,
And o'er his eye-balls ſwam the ſhades of night;
But Boreas riſing freſh, with gentle breath,
Recall'd his ſpirit from the gates of death.
The gen'rous Greeks recede with tardy pace,
Tho' Mars and Hector thunder in their face;

None

Ver. 848. *Nor Hector to the chief replies.*] Homer is in nothing more admirable than in the excellent uſe he makes of the ſilence of the perſons he introduces.

Ver. 858. *But Boreas riſing freſh.*] Sarpedon's fainting at the extraction of the dart, and reviving by the free air, ſhews the great judgment of our author in theſe matters.

Ver. 860. *The gen'rous Greeks, &c.*] This ſlow and orderly retreat of the Greeks, with their front conſtantly turned to the enemy, is a fine encomium both of their courage and diſcipline.

This

None turn their backs to mean ignoble flight,
Slow they retreat, and ev'n retreating fight.
Who firſt, who laſt, by Mars and Hector's hand
Stretch'd in their blood, lay gaſping on the ſand?
Teuthras the great, Oreſtes the renown'd
For manage'd ſteeds, and Trechus preſs'd the ground;
Next Oenomaus, and Oenop's offspring dy'd;
Oreſbius laſt fell groaning at their ſide:
Oreſbius, in his painted mitre gay,
In fat Bœotia held his wealthy ſway,
Where lakes ſurround low Hyle's watry plain;
A prince and people ſtudious of their gain.
The carnage Juno from the ſkies ſurvey'd,
And touched with grief beſpoke the blue-ey'd maid.
Oh ſight accurſt! ſhall faithleſs Troy prevail,
And ſhall our promiſe to our people fail?
How vain the word to Menelaus giv'n
By Jove's great daughter and the queen of heav'n,
Beneath his arms that Priam's tow'rs ſhall fall;
If warring gods for ever guard the wall?
Mars, red with ſlaughter, aids our hated foes:
Haſte, let us arm, and force with force oppoſe!

This manner of retreat was in uſe among the ancient Lacedæmonians, as were many other martial cuſtoms deſcribed by Homer. This practice took its riſe among that brave people, from the apprehenſions of being ſlain with a wound received in their backs: Such a misfortune was not only attended with the higheſt infamy but they had found a way to puniſh them who ſuffered thus even after their death, by denying them (as Euſtathius informs us) the rites of burial.

Ver. 864. *Who firſt, who laſt, by Mars and Hector's hand*
Stretch'd in their blood, lay gaſping on the ſand?

This manner of breaking into an interrogation, amidſt the deſcription of a battle, is what ſerves very much to awaken the reader. It is here an invocation to the muſe that prepare us for ſomething uncommon; and the muſe is ſuppoſed immediately to anſwer, *Teuthras the great, &c.*

She ſpoke: Minerva burns to meet the war:
And now heav'n's empreſs calls her blazing car.
At her command ruſh forth the ſteeds divine;
Rich with immortal gold their trappings ſhine.
Bright Hebe waits; by Hebe ever young,
The whirling wheels are to the chariot hung.
On the bright axle turns the bidden wheel
Of ſounding braſs; the poliſh'd axle ſteel.
Eight brazen ſpokes in radiant order flame;
The circles gold, of uncorrupted frame,
Such as the heav'ns produce: and round the gold
Two brazen rings of work divine were roll'd.
The boſſy naves of ſolid ſilver ſhone;
Braces of gold ſuſpend the moving throne:
The car behind an arching figure bore;
The bending concave form'd an arch before.
Silver the beam, th' extended yoke was gold,
And golden reins th' immortal courſers hold.
Herſelf, impatient, to the ready car
The courſers joins, and breathes revenge and war.
Pallas diſrobes; her radiant veil unty'd,
With flow'rs adorn'd, with art diverſify'd,

The

Ver. 885. *And now heav'n's empreſs calls her blazing car,* &c.] Homer ſeems never more delighted than when he has ſome occaſion of diſplaying his ſkill in mechanics. The detail he gives us of this chariot is a beautiful example of it, where he takes occaſion to deſcribe every different part with a happineſs rarely to be found in deſcriptions of this nature.

Ver. 904. *Pallas diſrobes.*] The fiction of Pallas arraying herſelf with the arms of Jupiter, finely intimates (ſays Euſtathius) that ſhe is nothing elſe but the wiſdom of the Almighty. The ſame author tells us, that the ancient marked this place with a ſtar, to diſtinguiſh it as one of thoſe that were perfectly admirable. Indeed there is a greatneſs and ſublimity in the whole paſſage, which is aſtoniſhing, and ſuperior to any imagination but that of Homer, nor is there any that might better give occaſion for that celebrated

ſaying,

(The labour'd veil her heav'nly fingers wove)
Flows on the pavement of the court of Jove.
Now heav'n's dread arms her mighty limbs inveſt,
Jove's cuiraſs blazes on her ample breaſt;
Deck'd in ſad triumph for the mournful field,
O'er her broad ſhoulders hangs his horrid ſhield,
Dire, black, tremendous! round the margin roll'd,
A fringe of ſerpents hiſſing guards the gold:
Here all the terrors of grim war appear,
Here rages Force, here tremble Flight and Fear,
Here ſtorm'd Contention, and here Fury frown'd,
And the dire orb portentous Gorgon crown'd.
The maſſy golden helm ſhe next aſſumes,
That dreadful nods with four o'erſhading plumes;
So vaſt, the broad circumference contains
A hundred armies on a hundred plains.
The goddeſs thus th' imperial car aſcends;
Shook by her arm the mighty jav'lin bends,
Pond'rous and huge; that when her fury burns,
Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hoſts o'erturns.

ſaying, That *he was the only man who had ſeen the forms of the Gods, or the only man who had ſhewn them.* With what nobleneſs he deſcribes the chariot of Juno, the armour of Minerva, the Ægis of Jupiter, filled with the figures of Horror, Affright, Diſcord, and all the terrors of war, the effects of his wrath againſt men; and that ſpear with which his power and wiſdom overturns whole armies, and humbles the pride of the kings who offend him!

Ver. 920. *So vaſt, the wide circumference contains A hundred armies.*] The words in the original are capable of two meanings; either that this helmet of Jupiter was ſufficient to have covered the the armies of an hundred cities, or that the armies of an hundred cities were engraven upon it. It is here tranſlated in ſuch a manner that it may be taken either way, though the learned are moſt inclined to the former ſenſe, as that idea is greater and more extraordinary, indeed more agreeable to Homer's bold manner, and not extravagant if we call in the allegory to our aſſiſtance, and imagine it (with M. Dacier) an alluſion to the providence of God that extends over all the univerſe.

Swift at the ſcourge th' ethereal courſers fly,
While the ſmooth chariot cuts the liquid ſky.
Heav'n's gates ſpontaneous open to the pow'rs,
Heav'n's golden gates, kept by the winged hours;
Commiſſion'd in alternate watch they ſtand,
The ſun's bright portals and the ſkies command,
Involve in clouds th' eternal gates of day,
Or the dark barrier roll with eaſe away.
The ſounding hinges ring: on either ſide
The gloomy volumes, pierce'd with light, divide.
The chariots mounts, where deep in ambient ſkies
Confus'd, Olympus hundred heads ariſe;
Where far apart the thund'rer fills his throne,
O'er all the gods, ſuperior and alone.
There with her ſnowy hand the queen reſtrains
The fiery ſteeds, and thus to Jove complains.
O ſire! can no reſentment touch thy ſoul?
Can Mars rebel, and does no thunder roll?
What lawleſs rage on yon forbidden plain,
What rath deſtruction! and what heroes ſlain!
Venus, and Phœbus with the dreadful bow,
Smile on the ſlaughter, and enjoy my woe.
Mad, furious pow'r! whoſe unrelenting mind
No god can govern, and no juſtice bind.

Ver. 928. *Heav'n's gates ſpontaneous open'd.*] This marvellous circumſtance of the gates of heaven opening themſelves of their own accord to the divinities that paſs through them, is copied by Milton, book 5.

——— At the gate
Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate ſelf-open'd wide
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine the ſov'reign architect had fram'd.

And again in the ſeventh book,

——— Heav'n open'd wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious ſound,
On golden hinges moving———

Say,

Say, mighty father! ſhall we ſcourge his pride,
And drive from fight th' impetuous homicide?
To whom aſſenting, thus the thund'rer ſaid:
Go! and the great Minerva be thy aid.
To tame the monſter-god Minerva knows,
And oft' afflicts his brutal breaſts with woes.
He ſaid; Saturnia, ardent to obey,
Laſh'd her white ſteeds along th' aerial way.
Swift down the ſteep of heav'n the chariot rolls,
Between th' expanded earth and ſtarry poles.
Far as a ſhepherd, from ſome point on high,
O'er the wide main extends his boundleſs eye;
Thro' ſuch a ſpace of air, with thund'ring ſound,
At ev'ry leap th' immortal courſers bound,
Troy now they reach'd, and touch'd thoſe banks divine,
Where ſilver Simois and Scamander join.
There Juno ſtopp'd, and (her fair ſteeds unloos'd)
Of air condens'd a vapour circumfus'd:
For theſe, impregnate with celeſtial dew
On Simois' brink ambroſial herbage grew.
Thence to relieve the fainting Argive throng,
Smooth as the ſailing doves, they glide along.

Ver. 960. *Far as a ſhepherd*, &c.] Longinus citing theſe verſes as a noble inſtance of the ſublime, ſpeaks to this effect. "In "what a wonderful manner does Homer exalt his deities; meaſuring the leaps of their very horſes by the whole breadth of the "horizon! who is there, that, conſidering the magnificence of "this hyperbole, would not cry out with reaſon, That if theſe "heavenly ſteeds were to make a ſecond leap, the world would "want room for a third?" Thus puts me in mind of that paſſage in Heſiod's Theogony, where he deſcribes the height of the heavens, by ſaying a ſmith's anvil would be nine days in falling from thence to earth.

Ver. 971. *Smooth as the ſailing doves.*] This ſimile is intended to expreſs the lightneſs and ſmoothneſs of the motion of theſe goddeſſes. The doves to which Homer compare them, are ſaid, by the ancient ſcholiaſt, to leave no impreſſion of their ſteps.

Thus

The beſt and braveſt of the Grecian band
(A warlike circle) round Tydides ſtand;
Such was their look as lions bath'd in blood,
Or foaming boars, the terror of the wood.
Heav'n's empreſs mingles with the mortal croud,
And ſhouts, in Stentor's ſounding voice, aloud:
Stentor the ſtrong, endu'd with brazen lungs,
Whoſe throat ſurpaſs'd the force of fifty tongues.
Inglorious Argives! to your race a ſhame,
And only men in figure and in name!
Once from the walls your tim'rous foes engage'd,
While fierce in war divine Achilles rage'd,
Now iſſuing fearleſs they poſſeſs the plain,
Now win the ſhores, and ſcarce the ſeas remain.
Her ſpeech new fury to their hearts convey'd;
While near Tydides ſtood th' Athenian maid;
The king beſide his panting ſteeds ſhe found;
O'erſpent with toil, repoſing on the ground:
To cool his glowing wound he ſate apart,
(The wound inflicted by the Lycian dart)
Large drops of ſweat from all his limbs deſcend,
Beneath his pond'rous ſhield his ſinews bend,
Whoſe ample belt that o'er his ſhoulders lay,
He eas'd; and waſh'd the clotted gore away.
The Goddeſs leaning o'er the bending yoke,
Beſide his courſers, thus her ſilence broke.

Ver. 978. *Stentor the ſtrong, endu'd with brazen lungs.*] There was a neceſſity for criers whoſe voices were ſtronger than ordinary, in thoſe ancient times, before the uſe of trumpets was known in their armies. And that they were in eſteem afterwards, may be ſeen from Herodotus, where he takes notice that Darius had in his train an Ægyptian, whoſe voice was louder and ſtronger than any man's of his age. There is a farther propriety in Homer's attributing this voice to Juno; becauſe Juno is no other than the air, and becauſe the air is the cauſe of ſound.

Degen'rate

Degen'rate prince! and not of Tydeus' kind,
Whose little body lodg'd a mighty mind;
Foremost he press'd in glorious toils to share,
And scarce refrain'd when I forbad the war.
Alone, unguarded, once he dar'd to go,
And fearst encircled by the Theban foe;
There brav'd, and vanquish'd, many a hardy knight;
Such nerves I gave him, and such force in fight.
Thou too no less has been my constant care;
Thy hands I arm'd, and sent thee forth to war:
But thee or fear deters, or sloth detains;
No drop of all thy father warms thy veins.
The chief thus answer'd mild. Immortal maid!
I own thy presence, and confess thy aid.
Not fear, thou know'st, withholds me from the plains,
Nor sloth hath seiz'd me, but thy word restrains:
From warring god thou bad'st me turn my spear,
And Venus only found resistance here.
Hence, goddess! heedful of thy high commands,
Loth I gave way, and warn'd our Argive bands:
For Mars, the homicide, these eyes beheld,
With slaughter red, and raging round the field.
Then thus Minerva. Brave Tydides, hear!
Not Mars himself nor ought immortal fear.
Full on the god impel thy foaming horse:
Pallas commands, and Pallas lends thee force.

Ver. 998. *Degen'rate prince!* &c.] This speech of Minerva to Diomed derives its whole force or efficacy from the offensive comparison she makes between Tydeus and his son. Tydeus, when he was single in the city of his enemy, fought and overcame the Thebans, even though Minerva forbad him; Diomed, in the midst of his army, and with enemies inferior in number, declines the fight, though Minerva commands him. Tydeus disobeys her, to engage in the battle; Diomed disobeys her, to avoid engaging; and that too after he had upon many occasions experienced the assistance of the goddess.

Rath,

Raſh, furious, blind, from theſe to thoſe he flies,
And ev'ry ſide of wav'ring combat tries;
Large promiſe makes, and breaks the promiſe made;
Now gives the Grecians, now the Trojans aid.
She ſaid, and to the ſteeds approaching near,
Drew from his ſeat the martial charioteer.
The vig'rous pow'r the trembling car aſcends,
Fierce for revenge; and Diomed attends.
The groaning axle bent beneath the load;
So great a hero, and ſo great a god
She ſnatch'd the reins, ſhe laſh'd with all her force,
And full on Mars impell'd the foaming horſe:
But firſt, to hide her heav'nly viſage, ſpread
Black Orcus' helmet o'er her radiant head.
Juſt then gigantic Periphas lay ſlain,
The ſtrongeſt warrior of the Ætolian train;
The god who ſlew him, leaves his proſtrate prize
Stretch'd where he fell, and at Tydides flies.
Now ruſhing fierce, in equal arms appear,
The daring Greek; the dreadful god of war!
Full at the chief, above his courſer's head,
From Mars his arm th' enormous weapon ſled:
Pallas oppos'd her hand, and caus'd to glance
Far from the car, the ſtrong immortal lance.
Then threw the force of Tydeus' warlike ſon;
The jav'lins hiſs'd; the goddeſs urge'd it on.

Ver. 1024. *Raſh, furious, blind, from theſe to thoſe he flies.*] Minerva, in this place, very well paints the manners of Mars, whoſe buſineſs was always to fortify the weaker ſide, in order to keep up the broil. I think the paſſage includes a fine allegory of the nature of war. Mars is called inconſtant, and a breaker of his promiſes, becauſe the chance of war is wavering, and uncertain victory is perpetually changing ſides.

Ver. 1037. *Black Orcus' helmet.*] As every thing that goes into the dark empire of Pluto, or Orcus, diſappears and is ſeen no more; the Greeks from thence borrowed this figurative expreſſion, *to put on Pluto's helmet*, that is to ſay, *to become inviſible*.

Where

Where the broad cincture girt his armour round,
It pierce'd the god: his groin receiv'd the wound.
From the rent ſkin the warrior tugs again
The ſmoaking ſteel. Mars bellows with the pain:
Loud, as the roar encountering armies yield,
When ſhouting millions ſhake the thund'ring field.
Both armies ſtart, and trembling gaze around;
And earth and heav'n rebellow to the ſound.
As vapours blown by Auſter's ſultry breath,
Pregnant with plagues, and ſhedding ſeeds of death
Beneath the rage of burning Sirius riſe,
Choak the parch'd earth, and blacken all the ſkies;
In ſuch a cloud the god from combat driv'n,
High o'er the duſty whirlwind ſcales the heav'n.
Wild with his pain, he ſought the bright abodes,
There ſullen ſat beneath the fire of gods,
Show'd the celeſtial blood, and with a groan
Thus pour'd his plaints before th' immortal throne.
Can Jove, ſupine, flagitious facts ſurvey,
And brook the furies of this daring day?"

Ver, 1054. *Loud as the roar encountering armies yield.*] This hyperbole, to expreſs the roaring of Mars, ſo ſtrong as it is, yet is not extravagant. It wants not a qualifying circumſtance or two; the voice is not human, but that of a deity; and the compariſon being taken from an army, renders it more natural with reſpect to the god of war. It is leſs daring to ſay, that a god could ſend forth a voice as loud as the ſhout of two armies, than that Camilla, a Latian nymph, could run ſo ſwiftly over the corn, as not to bend an ear of it. Or, to allege a nearer inſtance, that Polyphemus, a mere mortal, ſhook all the iſland of Sicily, and made the deepeſt caverns of Ætna roar with his cries.

Ver. 1058. *As vapour blown,* etc.] Mars after a ſharp engagement, amidſt the rout of the Trojans, wrapt in a whirlwind of duſt, which was raiſed by ſo many thouſand combatants, flies towards Olympus. Homer compares him in this eſtate, to thoſe black clouds, which, during a ſcorching ſouthern wind in the dog-days, are ſometimes borne towards heaven; for the wind at that time gathering the duſt together, forms a dark cloud of it.

For

For mortal men celeſtial pow'rs engage,
And gods on gods exert eternal rage.
From thee, O father! all theſe ills we bear,
And thy fell daughter with the ſhield and ſpear:
Thou gav'ſt that fury to the realms of light,
Pernicious, wild, regardleſs of the right.
All heav'n beſide reveres thy ſov'reign ſway,
Thy voice we hear, and thy beheſts obey:
'Tis hers t' offend, and ev'n offending ſhare
Thy breaſt, thy counſels, thy diſtinguiſh'd care:
So boundleſs ſhe, and thou ſo partial grown,
Well may we deem the wond'rous birth thy own.
Now frantic Diomed, at her command,
Againſt th' immortals lifts his raging hand:
The heav'nly Venus firſt his fury found,
Me next encount'ring, me he dar'd to wound:
Vanquiſh'd I fled: even I the god of fight,
From mortal madneſs ſcarce was ſav'd by flight.
Elſe hadſt thou ſeen me ſink on yonder plain,
Heap'd round, and heaving under loads of ſlain!
Or pierce'd with Grecian darts, for ages lie,
Condemn'd to pain, tho' fated not to die.

Ver. 1074. *Thou gav'ſt that fury to the realms of light, Pernicious, wild,* etc.] It is very artful in Homer, to make Mars accuſe Minerva of all thoſe faults and enormities he was himſelf ſo eminently guilty of. Thoſe people who are the moſt unjuſt and violent, accuſe others, even the beſt, of the ſame crimes: every irrational man is a diſtorted rule, tries every thing by that wrong meaſure, and forms his judgment accordingly. Euſtathius.

Ver. 1091. *Condemn'd to pain, tho' fated not to die.*] Thoſe are miſtaken who imagine our author repreſents his Gods as mortal. He only repreſents the inferior or corporeal deities as capable of pains and puniſhments, during the will of Jupiter, which is not inconſiſtent with true theology. If Mars is ſaid in Dione's ſpeech to Venus to have been near periſhing by Otus and Ephialtes, it means no more than laſting miſery, ſuch as Jupiter threatens him with when he ſpeaks of precipitating him into Tartarus.

Him

Him thus upbraiding, with a wrathful look
The lord of thunders view'd, and ſtern beſpoke.
To me, perfidious! this lamenting ſtrain?
Of lawleſs force ſhall lawleſs Mars complain?
Of all the gods who tread the ſpangled ſkies,
Thou moſt unjuſt, moſt odious in our eyes!
Inhuman diſcord is the dire delight,
The waſte of ſlaughter, and the rage of fight.
No bound, no law thy fiery temper quells,
And all thy mother in thy ſoul rebels.
In vain our threats, in vain our pow'r we uſe;
She gives th' example, and her ſon purſues.
Yet long th' inflicted pangs thou ſhalt not mourn,
Sprung ſince thou art from Jove, and heav'nly born.
Elſe, finge'd with light'ning, had'ſt thou hence been thrown,
Where chain'd on burning rocks the Titans groan.
Thus he who ſhakes Olympus with his nod;
Then gave to Pæon's care the bleeding god.
With gentle hand the balm he pour'd around,
And heal'd th' immortal fleſh, and cloſ'd the wound.
As when the fig's preſt juice, infus'd in cream,
To curds coagulates the liquid ſtream,

Sudden

Ver. 1096. *Of all the Gods——Thou moſt unjuſt, moſt odious*, etc.] Jupiter's reprimand of Mars is worthy the juſtice and goodneſs of the great Governor of the world, and ſeems to be no more than was neceſſary in this place.

Ver. 1102. *And all thy mother in thy ſoul rebels*, etc.] Jupiter ſays of Juno, that "ſhe has a temper which is inſupportable, and "knows not how to ſubmit, though he is perpetually chaſtiſing "her with his reproofs."

Ver. 1112. *As when the fig's preſt juice*, etc.] The ſudden operation of the remedy adminiſtred by Pæon, is well expreſſed by this ſimilitude. It is neceſſary juſt to take notice, that they anciently made uſe of the juice or ſap of a fig for runnet, to cauſe their milk to coagulate. It may not be amiſs to obſerve, that Homer is very

Sudden the fluids fix, the parts combin'd;
Such, and ſo ſoon, th' ætherial texture join'd. 1115
Cleans'd from the duſt and gore, fair Hebe dreſt
His mighty limbs in an immortal veſt.
Glorious he ſate, in majeſty reſtor'd,
Faſt by the throne of heav'n's ſuperior lord.
Juno and Pallas mount the bleſt abodes,
Their taſk perform'd, and mix among the gods.

very delicate in the choice of his alluſions. He often borrowed his ſimiles from low life, and provided they illuſtrated his thoughts in a juſt and lively manner, it was all he had regard to.

THE allegory of this whole book lies ſo open, is carried on with ſuch cloſeneſs, and wound up with ſo much fullneſs and ſtrength, that it is a wonder how it could enter into the imagination of any critic, that theſe actions of Diomed were only a daring and extravagant fiction in Homer, as if he affected the marvellous at any rate. The great moral of it is, that a brave man ſhould not contend againſt heaven, but reſiſt only Venus and Mars, incontinence and ungoverned fury. Diomed is propoſed as an example of a great and enterpriſing nature, which would perpetually be venturing too far, and committing extravagancies or impieties, did it not ſuffer itſelf to be checked and guided by Minerva or Prudence: for it is this Wiſdom (as we are told in the very firſt lines of the book) that raiſes a hero above all others.

THE

THE ILIAD.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Epiſodes of Glaucus and Diomed, and of Hector and Andromache.

THE Gods having left the field, the Grecians prevail. Helenus, the chief augur of Troy, commands Hector to return to the city, in order to appoint a ſolemn proceſſion of the queen and the Trojan matrons to the temple of Minerva, to intreat her to remove Diomed from the fight. The battle relaxing during the abſence of Hector, Glaucus and Diomed have an interview between the two armies; where coming to the knowledge of the friendſhip and hoſpitality paſt between their anceſtors, they make exchange of their arms. Hector, having performed the orders of Helenus, prevailed upon Paris to return to the battle, and having taken a tender leave of his wife Andromache, haſtens again to the field.

The ſcene is firſt in the field of battle, between the rivers Simois and Scamander, and then changes to Troy.

NOW heav'n forſakes the fight: th' immortals yield
To human force and human ſkill, the field:
Dark ſhow'rs of jav'lins fly from foes to foes;
Now here, now there, the tide of combat flows;

While Troy's fam'd * ſtreams that bound the deathful plain,
On either ſide run purple to the main.

Great Ajax firſt to conqueſt led the way,
Broke the thick ranks, and turn'd the doubtful day.
The Thracian Acamas his faulchion found,
And hew'd th' enormous giant to the ground;
His thund'ring arm a deadly ſtroke impreſt
Where the black horſe-hair nodded o'er his creſt:
Fix'd in his front the brazen weapen lies,
And ſeals in endleſs ſhades his ſwimming eyes.
Next Teuthras' ſon diſtain'd the ſands with blood,
Axylus, hoſpitable, rich and good:

In

* Scamander and Simois.

Ver. 7. *Firſt Ajax.*] Ajax performs his exploits immediately upon the departure of the Gods from the battle. It is obſerved that this hero is never aſſiſted by the deities, as moſt of the reſt are: ſee his character in the notes on the ſeventh book. The expreſſion of the Greek is, that he brought light to his troops, which M. Dacier takes to be metaphorical: I do not ſee but it may be literal; he broke the thick ſquadrons of the enemy, and opened a paſſage for the light.

Ver. 9. *The Thracian Acamas.*] This Thracian prince is the ſame in whoſe likeneſs Mars appears in the preceding book, rallying the Trojans, and forcing the Greeks to retire. In the preſent deſcription of his ſtrength and ſize, we ſee with what propriety this perſonage was ſelected by the poet, as fit to be aſſumed by the God of war.

Ver. 16. *Axylus, hoſpitable.*] This beautiful character of Axylus has not been able to eſcape the miſunderſtanding of ſome of the commentators, who thought Homer deſigned it as a reproof of an undiſtinguiſhed generoſity. It is evidently a panegyric on that virtue, and not improbably on the memory of ſome excellent, but unfortunate man in that country, whom the poet honours with the noble title of *A friend to mankind.* It is indeed a ſevere reproof of the ingratitude of men, and a kind of ſatire on human race, while he repreſents this lover of his ſpecies miſerably periſhing without aſſiſtance from any of thoſe numbers he had obliged. This death is very moving, and the circumſtance of a faithful ſervant's dying

by

In fair Ariſba's walls (his native place)
He held his ſeat; a friend to human race.
Faſt by the road, his ever-open door
Oblige'd the wealthy, and reliev'd the poor.
To ſtern Tydides now he falls a prey,
No friend to guard him in the dreadful day!
Breathleſs the good man fell, and by his ſide
His faithful ſervant, old Caleſius dy'd.
By great Euryalus was Dreſus ſlain
And next he laid Opheltius on the plain.
Two twins were near, bold, beautiful and young,
From a fair Naiad and Bucolion ſprung:
(Laomedon's white flocks Bucolion fed,
That monarch's firſt born by a foreign bed;
In ſecret woods he won the Naiad's grace,
And two fair infants crown'd his ſtrong embrace.)
Here dead they lay in all their youthful charms:
The ruthleſs victor ſtripp'd their ſhining arms.
Aſtyalus by Polypætes fell;
Ulyſſes's ſpear Pidytes ſent to hell:
By Teucer's ſhaft brave Aretaon bled,
And Neſtor's ſon laid ſtern Ablerus dead;
Great Agamemnon, leader of the brave,
The mortal wound of rich Elatus gave,
Who held in Peduſus his proud abode,
And till'd the banks where ſilver Satnio flow'd.
Melanthius by Eurypylus was ſlain;
And Phylacus from Leitus flies in vain.

by his ſide, well imagined, and natural to ſuch a character. His manner of keeping houſe near a frequented highway, and relieving all travellers, is agreeable to that ancient hoſpitality which we now only read of. There is abundance of this ſpirit every where in the Odyſſey. The patriarchs in the Old Teſtament ſit at their gates to ſee thoſe who paſs by, and intreat them to enter into their houſes; this cordial manner of invitation is particularly deſcribed in the 18th and 19th chapters of Geneſis.

Unbleſt Adraſtus next at mercy lies
Beneath the Spartan ſpear, a living prize.
Scar'd with the din and tumult of the fight,
His headlong ſteeds, precipitate in flight,
Ruſh'd on a Tamariſk's ſtrong trunk, and broke
The ſhatter'd chariot from the crooked yoke;
Wide o'er the field, reſiſtleſs as the wind,
For Troy they fly, and leave their lord behind.
Prone on his face he ſinks beſide the wheel:
Atrides o'er him ſhakes his vengeful ſteel;
The fallen chief in ſuppliant poſture preſs
The victor's knees, and thus his pray'r addreſs'd.
Oh ſpare my youth, and for the life I owe
Large gifts of price my father ſhall beſtow;
When fame ſhall tell, that not in battle ſlain
Thy hollow ſhips his captive ſon detain,
Rich heaps of braſs ſhall in thy tent be told;
And ſteel well temper'd, and perſuaſive gold.
He ſaid: compaſſion touch'd the hero's heart,
He ſtood ſuſpended with the lifted dart:
As pity pleaded for his vanquiſh'd prize,
Stern Agamemnon ſwift to vengeance flies,
And furious, thus. Oh impotent of mind!
Shall theſe, ſhall theſe Atrides's mercy find?
Well haſt thou known proud Troy's perfidious land,
And well her natives merit at thy hand!
Not one of all the race, nor ſex, nor age,
Shall ſave a Trojan from our boundleſs rage:
Ilion ſhall periſh whole, and bury all;
Her babes, her infants at the breaſt, ſhall fall.

Ver. 57. *Oh ſpare my youth*, etc.] This paſſage, where Agamemnon takes away that Trojan's life, whom Menelaus had pardoned, and is not blamed by Homer for ſo doing, muſt be aſcribed to the uncivilized manners of thoſe times, when mankind was not united by the bonds of a rational ſociety, and is not therefore to be imputed to the poet, who followed Nature as it was in his days.

A dreadful leſſon of exampled fate,
To warn the nations, and to curb the great!
The monarch ſpoke; the words with warmth addreſt
To rigid juſtice ſteel'd his brother's breaſt.
Fierce from his knees the hapleſs chief he thruſt;
The monarch's jav'lin ſtretch'd him in the duſt.
Then preſſing with his foot his panting heart,
Forth from the ſlain he tugg'd the reeking dart.
Old Neſtor ſaw, and rouz'd the warrior's rage;
Thus, heroes! thus the vig'rous combat wage!
No ſon of Mars deſcend, for ſervile gains,
To touch the booty, while a foe remains.
Behold yon glitt'ring heſt, your future ſpoil!
Firſt gain the conqueſt, then reward the toil.
And now had Greece eternal fame acquir'd,
And frighted Troy within her walls retir'd;
Had not ſage Helenus her ſtate redreſt,
Taught by the Gods that mov'd his ſacred breaſt;
Where Hector ſtood, with great Æneas join'd,
The ſeer reveal'd the counſels of his mind.
Ye gen'rous chiefs! on whom th' immortals lay
The cares and glories of this doubtful day,

Ver. 88, *Firſt gain the conqueſt, then reward the ſpoil.*] This important maxim of war is very naturally introduced, upon Neſtor's having ſeen Menelaus ready to ſpare an enemy for the ſake of a ranſom. It was for ſuch leſſons as theſe (ſays M. Dacier) that Alexander ſo much eſteemed Homer, and ſtudied his poem. He made his uſe of this precept in the battle of Arbela, when Parmenio being in danger of weakening the main body to defend the baggage, he ſent this meſſage to him: "Leave the baggage there; "for if we gain the victory, we ſhall not only recover what is our "own, but be maſters of all that is the enemy's." Hiſtories ancient and modern are filled with examples of enterprizes that have miſcarried, and battles that have been loſt, by the greedineſs of ſoldiers for pillage.

Or

On whom your aids, your country's hopes depend,
Wiſe to conſult, and active to defend!
Here, at our gates, your brave efforts unite,
Turn back the routed, and forbid the flight;
Ere yet their wives ſoft arms the cowards gain,
The ſport and inſult of the hoſtile train.
When your commands have hearten'd ev'ry band,
Ourſelves, here fix'd, will make the dang'rous ſtand;
Preſs'd as we are, and ſore of former fight,
Theſe ſtraits demand our laſt remains of might.
Meanwhile, thou Hector to the town retire,
And teach our mother what the Gods require:
Direct the queen to lead th' aſſembled train
Of Troy's chief matrons to Minerva's fane;

Ver. 98. *Wiſe to conſult, and active to defend.*] This is a two-fold branch of praiſe, expreſſing the excellence of thoſe princes both in council and in battle.

Ver. 107. *Thou Hector to the town.*] It has been a modern objection to Homer's conduct, that Hector, upon whom the whole fate of the day depended, is made to retire from the battle only to carry a meſſage to Troy concerning a ſacrifice, which might have been done as well by any other. They think it abſurd in Helenus to adviſe this, and in Hector to comply with it. What occaſioned this falſe criticiſm, was, that they imagined it to be a piece of advice, and not a command. Helenus was a prieſt and augur of the higheſt rank, he enjoins it as a point of religion, and Hector obeys him as one inſpired from heaven. The Trojan army was in the utmoſt diſtreſs, occaſioned by the prodigious ſlaughter made by Diomed: there was therefore more reaſon and neceſſity to propitiate Minerva who aſſiſted that hero; which Helenus might know, tho' Hector would have chosen to have ſtayed and truſted to the arm of fleſh. Here is nothing but what may agree with each of their characters. Hector goes as he was obliged in religion, but not before he has animated the troops, re-eſtabliſhed the combat, repulſe the Greeks to ſome diſtance, received a promiſe from Helenus, that they would make a ſtand at the gates, and given one himſelf to the army, that he would ſoon return to the fight: all which Homer has been careful to ſpecify, to ſave the honour, and preſerve the character, of this hero.

Unbar

Unbar the ſacred gates, and ſeek the pow'r
With offer'd vows, in Ilion's topmoſt tow'r.
The largeſt mantle her rich wardrobes hold,
Moſt priz'd for art, and labour'd o'er with gold,
Before the goddeſs' honour'd knees he ſpread;
And twelve young heifers to her altars led.
If ſo the pow'r, atton'd by fervent pray'r,
Our wives, our infants, and our city ſpare,
And far avert Tydides' waſteful ire,
That mows whole troops, and makes all Troy retire.
Not thus Achilles taught our hoſts to dread,
Sprung tho' he was from more than mortal bed;
Not thus reſiſtleſs rul'd the ſtream of fight,
In rage unbounded, and unmatch'd in might.
Hector obedient heard; and, with a bound,
Leap'd from his trembling chariot to the ground;
Thro' all his hoſt, inſpiring force, he flies,
And bids the thunder of the battle riſe.
With rage recruited the bold Trojans glow,
And turn the tide of conflict on the foe:
Fierce on the front he ſhakes two dazling ſpears:
All Greece recedes, and midſt her triumph fears,
Some God, they thought, who rul'd the fate of wars,
Shot down avenging, from the vault of ſtars.
Then thus, aloud. Ye dauntleſs Dardans hear!
And you whom diſtant nations ſend to war!
Be mindful of the ſtrength your fathers bore;
Be ſtill yourſelves, and Hector aſks no more.
One hour demands me in the Trojan wall,
To bid our altars flame, and victims fall:
Nor ſhall, I truſt, the matrons holy train
And rev'rend elders, ſeek the Gods in vain.
This ſaid, with ample ſtrides the hero paſt;
The ſhield's large orb behind his ſhoulders caſt,
His neck o'erſhading, to his ancle hung;
And as he march'd, the brazen buckler rung.

Now

Now paus'd the battle, (godlike Hector gone)
When daring Glaucus and great Tydeus' ſon
Between both armies met: the chiefs from far
Obſerv'd each other, and had mark'd for war.
Near as they drew, Tydides thus began.
What art thou, boldeſt of the race of man?
Our eyes, 'till now, that aſpect ne'er beheld,
Where fame is reap'd amid th' embattel'd field:
Yet far before the troops thou dar'ſt appear,
And met a lance the fierceſt heroes fear.
Unhappy they, and born of luckleſs fires,
Who tempt our fury when Minerva fires?
But if from heaven, celeſtial thou deſcend;
Know, with immortals we no more contend.

Ver. 149. *Between both armies met*, etc.] It is uſual with Homer, before he introduces a hero, to make as it were a halt, to render him the more remarkable. Nothing could more prepare the attention and expectation of the reader, than this circumſtance at the firſt meeting of Diomede and Glaucus. Juſt at the time when the mind begins to be weary with the battle, it is diverted with the proſpect of a ſingle combat, which of a ſudden turns to an interview of friendſhip, and an unexpected ſcene of ſociable virtue. The whole air of the converſation between theſe two heroes has ſomething heroically ſolemn in it.

Ver. 159. *But if from heav'n*, etc.] A quick change of mind from the greateſt impiety to as great ſuperſtition, is frequently obſervable in men, who, having been guilty of the moſt heinous crimes without any remorſe, on the ſudden are filled with doubts and ſcruples about the moſt lawful or indifferent actions. This ſeems the preſent caſe of Diomed, who having knowingly wounded and inſulted the deities, is now afraid to engage the firſt man he meets, leſt perhaps a God might be concealed in that ſhape. This diſpoſition of Diomed produces the queſtion he puts to Glaucus, which without this conſideration will appear impertinent, and ſo naturally occaſions that agreeable epiſode of Bellerophon, which Glaucus relates in anſwer to Diomed.

Not

Not long Lycurgus view'd the golden light,
That daring man who mixt with gods in fight;
Bacchus, and Bacchus' votaries, he drove
With brandiſh'd ſteel from Nyſſa's ſacred grove.
Their conſecrated ſpears lay ſcatter'd round,
With curling vines and twiſted ivy bound;
While Bacchus headlong ſought the briny flood.
And Thetis' arms receiv'd the trembling God.
Nor fail'd the crime th' immortals wrath to move,
(Th' immortals bleſt with endleſs eaſe above)
Depriv'd of ſight by their avenging doom,
Chearleſs he breath'd, and wander'd in the gloom:
Then ſunk unpity'd to the dire abodes,
A wretch accurſt, and hated by the Gods!
I brave not heav'n: but if the fruits of earth
Suſtains thy life, and human be thy birth;
Bold as thou art, too prodigal of breath,
Approach, and enter the dark gates of death.
What, or from whence I am, or who my ſire,
(Reply'd the chief) can Tydeus's ſon inquire?

Ver. 161. *Not long Lycurgus*, etc.] What Diomed here ſays is the effect of remorſe, as if he had exceeded the commiſſion of Pallas in encountering with the Gods, and dreaded the conſequences of proceeding too far. At leaſt he had no ſuch commiſſion now, and beſides, was no longer capable of diſtinguiſhing them from men, (a faculty ſhe had given him in the foregoing book:) he therefore mentions this ſtory of Lycurgus as an example that ſufficed to terrify him from ſo raſh an undertaking.

Ver. 178. *Approach, and enter the dark gates of death.*] This haughty air which Homer gives his heroes was doubtleſs a copy of the manners and hyperbolical ſpeeches of thoſe times. Thus Goliah to David, 1 Sam. ch. xvii. *Approach, and I will give thy fleſh to the fowls of the air and the beaſts of the field.* The Orientals ſpeak the ſame language to this day.

Like leaves on trees the race of man is found,
Now green in youth, now with'ring on the ground;
Another race the following ſpring ſupplies,
They fall ſucceſſive, and ſucceſſive riſe;
So generations in their courſe decay,
So flouriſh theſe, when thoſe are paſt away.
But if thou ſtill perſiſt to ſearch my birth,
Then hear a tale that fills the ſpacious earth.

A city ſtands on Argos' utmoſt bound,
(Argos the fair for warlike ſteeds renown'd)
Æolian Siſyphus, with wiſdom bleſt,
In ancient time the happy walls poſſeſt,
Then call'd Ephyre: Glaucus was his ſon;
Great Glaucus, father of Bellerophon,
Who o'er the ſons of men in beauty ſhin'd,
Lov'd for that valour which preſerves mankind.

Ver. 181. *Like leaves on trees.*] There is a noble gravity in the beginning of this ſpeech of Glaucus, according to the true ſtyle of antiquity, *Few and evil are our days.* This beautiful thought of our author, whereby the race of men are compared to the leaves of trees, is celebrated by Simonides in a fine fragment extant in Stobæus. The ſame thought may be found in Eccleſiaſticus, ch. xiv. ver. 18. almoſt in the ſame words; *As of the green leaves on a thick tree, ſome fall, and ſome grow; ſo is the generation of fleſh and blood, one cometh to an end, and another is born.*

Ver. 193. *Then call'd Ephyre.*] It was the ſame which was afterwards called Corinth, and had that name in Homer's time, as appears from this catalogue, ver. 77.

Ver. 196. *Lov'd for that valour which preſerves mankind.*] This diſtinction of true valour, which has the good of mankind for its end, in oppoſition to the valour of tyrants or oppreſſors, is beautifully hinted by Homer in the epithet ἐρατεινὴ, *amiable valour.* Such was that of Bellerophon, who freed the land from monſters, and creatures deſtructive to his ſpecies. It is applied to this young hero with particular judgment and propriety, if we conſider the innocence and gentleneſs of his manners appearing from the following ſtory, which every one will obſerve has a great reſemblance with that of Joſeph in the Scriptures.

Then

Then mighty Prætus Argos' ſceptre's ſway'd,
Whoſe hard commands Bellerophon obey'd.
With direful jealouſy the monarch rage'd,
And the brave prince in num'rous toils engage'd.
For him, Antæa burn'd with lawleſs flame,
And ſtrove to tempt him from the paths of fame;
In vain ſhe tempted the relentleſs youth,
Endu'd with wiſdom, ſacred fear, and truth.
Fir'd at his ſcorn the queen to Prætus fled,
And begg'd revenge for her inſulted bed:
Incens'd he heard, reſolving on his fate;
But hoſpitable laws reſtrain'd his hate:
To Lycia the devoted youth he ſent,
With tablets ſeal'd, that told his dire intent.
Now bleſt by ev'ry pow'r who guards the good,
The chief arriv'd at Xanthus' ſilver flood:
There Lycia's monarch paid him honours due;
Nine days he feaſted, and nine bulls he ſlew.
But when the tenth bright morning orient glow'd,
The faithful youth his monarch's mandate ſhow'd:
The fatal tablets, 'till that inſtant ſeal'd,
The deathful ſecret to the king reveal'd.
Firſt dire Chimæra's conqueſt was enjoin'd:
A mingled monſter, of no mortal kind;
Behind,

Ver. 216. *The faithful youth his monarch's mandate ſhew'd.*] Plutarch much commends the virtue of Bellerophon, who faithfully carried thoſe letters he might ſo juſtly ſuſpect of ill conſequence to him: the paſſage is in his diſcourſe of curioſity, and worth tranſcribing. "A man of curioſity is void of all faith, and it is better "to truſt letters or any important ſecrets to ſervants, than to friends "and familiars of an inquiſitive temper. Bellerophon, when he "carried letters that ordered his own deſtruction, did not unſeal "them, but forbore touching the king's diſpatches with the ſame continence, as he had refrained from injuring his bed: for curioſity is an incontinence as well as adultery."

Ver. 219. *Firſt dire Chimæra.*] Chimæra was feigned to have

Behind, a dragon's fiery tail was ſpread;
A goat's rough body bore a lion's head;
Her pitchy noſtrils flaky flames expire;
Her gaping throat emits infernal fire.
This peſt he ſlaughter'd (for he read the ſkies,
And truſted heav'n's informing prodigies;)
Then met in arms the Solymæan crew,
(Fierceſt of men) and thoſe the warrior ſlew.
Next the bold Amazon's whole force defy'd;
And conquer'd ſtill, for heav'n was on his ſide.
Nor ended here his toils: his Lycian foes,
At his return, a treacherous ambuſh roſe,
With levell'd ſpears along the winding ſhore;
There fell they breathleſs, and return'd no more.
At length the monarch with repentant grief
Confeſs'd the Gods, and God-deſcended chief;
His daughter gave, the ſtranger to detain,
With half the honours of his ample reign.
The Lycians grant a choſen ſpace of ground,
With woods, with vineyards, and with harveſts crown'd.

the head of a lion breathing flames, the body of a goat, and the tail of a dragon; becauſe the mountain of that name in Lycia had a vulcano on its top, and nouriſhed lions; the middle part afforded paſture for goats, and the bottom was infeſted with ſerpents. Bellerophon deſtroying theſe, and rendering the mountain habitable, was ſaid to have conquered Chimæra.

Ver. 227. *The Solymæan crew.*] Theſe Solymi were an ancient nation inhabiting the mountainous parts of Aſia Minor, between Lycia and Piſidia. Pliny mentions them as an inſtance of a people ſo entirely deſtroyed, that no footſteps of them remained in his time. Some authors both ancient and modern, from a reſemblance in ſound to the Latin name of Jeruſalem, have confounded them with the Jews.

Ver. 239. *The Lycians grant a choſen ſpace of ground.*] It was uſual in the ancient times, upon any ſignal piece of ſervice performed by the kings, or great men, to have a portion of land decreed by the *public as a* reward to them.

The

There long the chief his happy lot poſſeſs'd.
With two brave ſons and one fair daughter bleſs'd,
(Fair ev'n in heav'nly eyes; her fruitful love
Crown'd with Sarpedon's birth th' embrace of Jove:)
But when at laſt, diſtracted in his mind,
Forſook by heav'n, forſaking human kind,
Wide o'er the Aleian field he choſe to ſtray,
A long, forlorn, uncomfortable way!
Woes heap'd on woes conſum'd his waſted heart;
His beauteous daughter fell by Phœbe's dart;
His eldeſt born by raging Mars was ſlain,
In combat on the Solymæan plain.
Hippolochus ſurviv'd; from him I came;
The honour'd author of my birth and name;
By his decree I ſought the Trojan town,
By his inſtructions learn to win renown,
To ſtand the firſt in worth as in command,
To add new honours to my native land,
Before my eyes my mighty ſires to place,
And emulate the glories of our race.
He ſpoke, and tranſport fill'd Tydides' heart;
In earth the gen'rous warrior fix'd his dart,
Then friendly, thus, the Lycian prince addreſt:
Welcome, my brave hereditary gueſt!
Thus ever let us meet, with kind embrace,
Nor ſtain the ſacred friendſhip of our race.
Know, chief, our grandſires have been gueſts of old;
Oeneus the ſtrong, Bellerophon the bold:

Our

Ver. 267. *Our grandſires have been gueſts of old.*] The laws of hoſpitality were anciently held in great veneration. The friendſhip contracted hereby was ſo ſacred, that they preferred it to all the bands of conſanguinity and alliance, and accounted it obligatory even to the third and fourth generation. We have ſeen in the foregoing ſtory of Bellerophon, that Prætus, a prince under the ſuppoſition of being injured in the higheſt degree, is yet afraid to revenge himſelf

Our ancient ſeat his honour'd preſence grace'd,
Where twenty days in genial rites he paſs'd.
The parting heroes mutual preſents left;
A golden goblet was thy grandſire's gift;
Oeneus a belt of matchleſs work beſtow'd.
That rich with Tyrian dye refulgent glow'd.
(This from his pledge I learn'd, which ſafely ſtor'd
Among my treaſures, ſtill adorns my board:
For Tydeus left me young, when Thebe's wall
Beheld the ſons of Greece untimely fall)
Mindful of this, in friendſhip let us join;
If heav'n our ſteps to foreign lands incline,
My gueſt in Argos thou, and I in Lycia thine.
Enough of Trojan to this lance ſhall yield,
In the full harveſt of yon' ample field;
Enough of Greeks ſhall dye thy ſpear with gore;
But thou and Diomed be foes no more.
Now change we arms, and prove to either hoſt
We guard the friendſhip of the line we boaſt.
Thus having ſaid, the gallant chiefs alight,
Their hands they join, their mutual faith they plight;

himſelf upon the criminal on this account: he is forced to ſend him into Lycia, rather than be guilty of a breach of this law in his own country. And the king of Lycia having entertained the ſtranger before he unſealed the letters, puts him upon expeditions abroad, in which he might be deſtroyed, rather than at his court. We here ſee Diomed and Glaucus agreeing not to be enemies during the whole courſe of a war, only becauſe their grandfathers had been mutual gueſts. And we afterwards find Teucer engaged with the Greeks on this account againſt the Trojans, though he was himſelf of Trojan extraction, the nephew of Priam by the mother's ſide, and couſin-german of Hector, whoſe life he purſues with the utmoſt violence. They preſerved in their families the preſents which had been made on theſe occaſions, as obliged to tranſmit to their children the memorials of this right of hoſpitality. Euſtathius.

Brave

Brave Glaucus then each narrow thought reſign'd,
Jove warm'd his boſom and inlarge'd his mind)
For Diomed's braſs arms, of mean device,
For which nine oxen paid (a vulgar price)
He gave his own, of gold divinely wrought,
A hundred beeves the ſhining purchaſe bought.
Meantime, the guardian of the Trojan ſtate,
Great Hector, enter'd at the Scæan gate.
Beneath the beech-tree's conſecrated ſhades,
The Trojan matrons and the Trojan maids
Around him flock'd, all preſs'd with pious care
For huſbands, brothers, ſons, engage'd in war.
He bids the train in long proceſſion go,
And ſeek the Gods t' avert th' impending woe.
And now to Priam's ſtately courts he came.
Rais'd on arch'd columns of ſtupendous frame;
O'er theſe a range of marble ſtructure runs,
The rich pavilions of his fifty ſons,
In fifty chambers lodged; and rooms of ſtate
Oppos'd to thoſe, where Priam's daughters ſat:
Twelve domes for them and their lov'd ſpouſes ſhone,
Of equal beauty, and of poliſh'd ſtone.

Ver. 291. *Jove warm'd his boſom, and enlarge'd his mind.*] The words in the original are ἐξέλετο φρένας, which may equally be interpreted, *he took away his ſenſe*, or, *he elevated his mind*: The former being a reflection upon Glaucus's prudence, for making ſo unequal an exchange, the latter a praiſe of the magnanimity and generoſity which induced him to it.

Ver. 295. *A hundred beeves.*] I wonder the curious have not remarked from this place, that the proportion of the value of gold to braſs in the time of the Trojan war, was but as an hundred to nine; allowing theſe armours of equal weight: which, as they belonged to men of equal ſtrength, is a reaſonable ſuppoſition. As to this manner of computing the value of the armour by beeves or oxen, it might be either becauſe the money was anciently ſtamped with thoſe figures, or, (which is moſt probable in this place) becauſe in thoſe times they generally purchaſed by exchange of commodities, as we ſee by a paſſage near the end of the ſeventh book.

Hither great Hector paſs'd, nor paſs'd unſeen
Of royal Hecuba, his mother queen.
(With her Laodice, whoſe beauteous face
Surpaſs'd the nymphs of Troy's illuſtrious race)
Long in a ſtrict embrace ſhe held her ſon,
And preſs'd his hands, and tender thus begun.
O Hector! ſay, what great occaſion calls
My ſon from fight, when Greece ſurrounds our walls?
Com'ſt thou to ſupplicate th' almighty pow'r,
With lifted hands from Ilion's lofty tow'r?
Stay, 'till I bring the cup with Bacchus crown'd,
In Jove's high name, to ſprinkle on the ground,
And pay due vows to all the Gods around.
Then with a plenteous draught refreſh thy ſoul,
And draw new ſpirits from the gen'rous bowl;
Spent as thou art with long laborious fight,
The brave defender of thy country's right.
Far hence be Bacchus' gifts (the chief rejoin'd)
Inflaming wine, pernicious to mankind,
Unnerves the limbs, and dulls the noble mind.
Let chiefs abſtain, and ſpare the ſacred juice
To ſprinkle to the Gods, its better uſe.
By me that holy office were prophan'd;
Ill fits it me, with human gore diſtain'd,
To the pure ſkies theſe horrid hands to raiſe,
Or offer heav'n's great fire polluted praiſe.
You, with your matrons, go! a ſpotleſs train,
And burn rich odours in Minerva's fane.

Ver. 329. *Far hence be Bacchus' gifts——Inflaming wine.*] This maxim of Hector's, concerning wine, has a great deal of truth in it. It is a vulgar miſtake to imagine the uſe of wine either raiſes the ſpirits, or increaſes ſtrength. The beſt phyſicians agree with Homer in this point; whatever our modern ſoldiers may object to this old heroic regimen. One may take notice, that Samſon as well as Hector was a water-drinker; for he was a Nazarite by vow, and as ſuch was forbid the uſe of wine.

The

The largeſt mantle your full wardrobes hold,
Moſt priz'd for art, and labour'd o'er with gold,
Before the goddeſs' honour'd knees be ſpread,
And twelve young heifers to her altar led.
So may the pow'r, attond by fervent pray'r,
Our wives, our infants, and our city ſpare,
And far avert Tydides' waſteful ire,
Who mows whole troops, and makes all Troy retire.
Be this, O mother, your religious care;
I go to rouze ſoft Paris to the war;
If yet, not loſt to all the ſenſe of ſhame,
The recreant warrior hear the voice of fame.
Oh would kind earth the hateful wretch embrace,
That peſt of Troy, that ruin of our race!
Deep to the dark abyſs might he deſcend,
Troy yet ſhould flouriſh, and my ſorrows end.
This heard, ſhe gave command; and ſummon'd came
Each noble matron, and illuſtrious dame.
The Phrygian queen to her rich wardrobe went,
Where treaſur'd odours breath'd a coſtly ſcent.
There lay the veſtures, of no vulgar art,
Sidonian maids embroider'd ev'ry part,
Whom from ſoft Sidon youthful Paris bore,
With Helen touching on the Tyrian ſhore.

Ver 361. *Sidonian maids.*] Dictys Cretenſis, lib. i. acquaints us that Paris returned not directly to Troy after the rape of Helen, but fetched a compaſs, probably to avoid purſuit. He touched at Sidon, where he ſurprized the king of Phœnicia by night, and carried off many of his treaſures and captives, among which probably were theſe Sidonian women. The author of the ancient poem of the Cypriacs ſays, he ſailed from Sparta to Troy in the ſpace of three days; from which paſſage Herodotus concludes that poem was not Homer's. We find in the Scriptures, that Tyre and Sidon were famous for works in gold, embroidery, etc. and for whatever regarded magnificence and luxury.

Here

Here as the queen revolv'd with careful eyes,
The various textures and the various dyes,
She choſe a veil that ſhone ſuperior far,
And glow'd refulgent as the morning ſtar.
Herſelf with this the long proceſſion leads;
The train majeſtically ſlow proceeds.
Soon as to Ilion's topmoſt tow'r they come,
And awful reach the high Palladian dome,
Antenor's conſort, fair Theano, waits
As Pallas' prieſteſs, and unbars the gates.
With hands uplifted and imploring eyes,
They fill the dome with ſupplicating cries.
The prieſteſs then the ſhining veil diſplays,
Place'd on Minerva's knees, and thus ſhe prays.
Oh awful goddeſs! ever dreadful maid,
Troy's ſtrong defence, unconquer'd Pallas, aid:
Break thou Tydides' ſpear, and let him fall
Prone on the duſt before the Trojan wall.
So twelve young heifers, guiltleſs of the yoke,
Shall fill thy temple with a grateful ſmoke.
But thou, atton'd by penitence and pray'r,
Ourſelves, our infants, and our city ſpare!
So pray'd the prieſteſs in her holy fane;
So vow'd the matrons, but they vow'd in vain.

Ver. 374. *With hands uplifted.*] The only geſture deſcribed by Homer, as uſed by the ancients in the invocation of the Gods, is the lifting up of their hands to heaven.

Ver. 378. *Oh awful Goddeſs*, etc.] This proceſſion of the Trojan matrons to the temple of Minerva, with their offering, and ceremonies; though it be a paſſage ſome moderns have criticiſed upon, ſeems to have particularly pleaſed Virgil.

Ver. 387. *But they vow'd in vain.*] For Helenus only ordered that prayers ſhould be made to Minerva to drive Diomed from before the walls. But Theano prays that Diomed may periſh, and periſh flying, which is included in his falling forward. Madam Dacier is ſo free as to obſerve here, that women are ſeldom moderate in the prayers they make againſt their enemies, and therefore are ſeldom heard.

While

While theſe appear before the pow'r with pray'rs,
Hector to Paris' lofty dome repairs.
Himſelf the manſion rais'd, from ev'ry part
Aſſembling architects of matchleſs art.
Near Priam's court and Hector's palace ſtands
The pompous ſtructure, and the town commands.
A ſpear the hero bore of wondrous ſtrength,
Of full ten cubits was the lance's length,
The ſteely point with golden ringlets join'd,
Before him brandiſh'd, at each motion ſhin'd.
Thus entering in the glitt'ring rooms he found
His brother-chief, whoſe uſeleſs arms lay round,
His eyes delighting with their ſplendid ſhow,
Bright'ning the ſhield, and poliſhing the bow.
Beſide him Helen with her virgins ſtands,
Guides their rich labours, and inſtructs their hands.
Him thus unactive, with an ardent look
The prince beheld, and high-reſenting ſpoke.
Thy hate to Troy, is this the time to ſhow?
(Oh wretch ill-fated, and thy country's foe!)
Paris

Ver. 390. *Himſelf the manſion rais'd.*] I muſt own myſelf not ſo great an enemy to Paris as ſome of the commentators. His blind paſſion is the unfortunate occaſion of the ruin of his country, and he has the ill fate to have all his fine qualities ſwallowed up in that. And indeed I cannot ſay he endeavours much to be a better man than his nature made him. But as to his parts and turn of mind, I ſee nothing that is either weak or wicked, the general meanneſs of thoſe times conſidered. On the contrary, a gentle ſoul, patient of good advice, though indo'ent enough to forget it; and liable only to that frailty of love, which methinks might in his caſe as well as Helen's be charged upon the ſtars, and the Gods. So very amorous a conſtitution, and ſo incomparable a beauty to provoke it, might be temptation enough even to a wiſe man, and in ſome degree make him deſerve compaſſion, if not pardon.

Ver. 406. *Thy hate to Troy,* etc.] All the commentators obſerve this ſpeech of Hector to be a piece of artifice; he ſeems to imagine

Paris and Greece againſt us both conſpire,
Thy cloſe reſentment, and their vengeful ire.
For thee great Ilion's guardian heroes fall,
Till heaps of dead alone defend her wall;
For thee the ſoldier bleeds, the matron mourns,
And waſteful war in all its fury burns.
Ungrateful man! deſerves not this thy care,
Our troops to hearten, and our toils to ſhare?
Riſe, or behold the conqu'ring flames aſcend,
And all the Phrygian glories at an end.
Brother, 'tis juſt (reply'd the beauteous youth)
Thy free remonſtrance proves thy worth and truth:
Yet charge my abſence leſs, oh gen'rous chief!
On hate to Troy, than conſcious ſhame and grief:
Here, hid from human eyes, thy brother ſat,
And mourn'd in ſecret, his, and Ilion's fate.
'Tis now enough; now glory ſpreads her charms,
And beauteous Helen calls her chief to arms.
Conqueſt to-day my happier ſword may bleſs,
'Tis man's to fight, but heav'n's to give ſucceſs.
But while I arm, contain thy ardent mind;
Or go, and Paris ſhall not lag behind.

that the retirement of Paris proceeds only from his reſentment againſt the Trojans, and not from his indolence, luxury, or any other cauſe.

Ver. 418. *Brother, 'tis juſt*, etc.] Paris readily lays hold of the pretext Hector had furniſhed him with, and confeſſes he has partly touched upon the true reaſon of his retreat, but that it was alſo partly occaſioned by the concern he felt at the victory of his rival. Next he profeſſes his readineſs for the fight: but nothing can be a finer trait (if we conſider his character) than what Homer puts into his mouth juſt in this place, that he is now exhorted to it by Helen: which ſhews, that not the danger of his country and parents, neither private ſhame, nor public hatred, could ſo much prevail upon him, as the commands of his miſtreſs, to go and recover his honour.

He ſaid, nor anſwer'd Priam's warlike ſon :
When Helen thus with lowly grace begun.
Oh gen'rous brother ! if the gilty dame
That caus'd theſe woes, deſerves a ſiſter's name !
Would heav'n, ere all theſe dreadful deeds were done
The day, that ſhow'd me to the golden ſun,
Had ſeen my death ! why did not whirlwinds bear
The fatal infant to the fowls of air ?
Why ſunk I not beneath the whelming tide,
And 'midſt the roarings of the waters dy'd ?
Heav'n fill'd up all my ills, and I accurſt
Bore all, and Paris of thoſe ills the worſt.
Helen at leaſt a braver ſpouſe might claim,
Warm'd with ſome virtue, ſome regard of fame !
Now tir'd with toils, thy fainting limbs recline,
With toils, ſuſtain'd for Paris' ſake and mine :
The Gods have link'd our miſerable doom,
Our preſent woe, and infamy to come :
Wide ſhall it ſpread, and laſt thro' ages long,
Example ſad ! and theme of future ſong.
The chief reply'd : this time forbids to reſt :
The Trojan bands, by hoſtile fury preſt,
Demand their Hector, and his arm require ;
The combat urges, and my ſoul's on fire,
Urge thou thy knight to march where glory calls,
And timely join me, ere I leave the walls.
Ere yet I mingle in the direful fray,
My wife, my infant, claim a moment's ſtay ;

Ver. 432. *Helen's ſpeech.*] The repentance of Helena (which we have before obſerved Homer never loſes an opportunity of manifeſting) is finely touched again here. Upon the whole, we ſee the Gods are always concerned in what befalls an unfortunate beauty : her ſtars foredoomed all the miſchief, and Heaven was to blame in ſuffering her to live : then ſhe fairly gets quit of the infamy of her lover, and ſhews ſhe has higher ſentiments of honour than he. How very natural is all this in the like characters to this day ?

This

This day (perhaps the laſt that ſees me here)
Demands a parting word, a tender tear:
This day, ſome God who hates our Trojan land
May vanquiſh Hector by a Grecian hand.
He ſaid, and paſs'd with ſad preſaging heart
To ſeek his ſpouſe, his ſoul's far dearer part;
At home he fought her, but he fought in vain:
She, with one maid of all her menial train,
Had thence retir'd; and with her ſecond joy,
The young Aſtyanax, the hope of Troy.
Penſive ſhe ſtood on Ilion's tow'ry height,
Beheld

Ver. 462. *The Epiſode of Hector and Andromache.*] Homer undoubtedly ſhines moſt upon the great ſubjects, in raiſing our admiration or terror: pity, and the ſofter paſſions, are not ſo much of the nature of his poem, which is formed upon anger and the violence of ambition. But we have cauſe to think his genius was no leſs capable of touching the heart with tenderneſs, than of firing it with glory, from the few ſketches he has left us of his excellence in that way too. In the preſent epiſode of the parting of Hector and Andromache, he has aſſembled all that love, grief, and compaſſion, could inſpire. The greateſt cenſurers of Homer have acknowledged themſelves charmed with this part; even Monſieur Perault tranſlated it into French verſe as a kind of penitential ſacrifice for the ſacrileges he had committed againſt this author.

This epiſode tends very much to raiſe the character of Hector, and endear him to every reader. This hero, though doubtful if he ſhould ever ſee Troy again, yet goes not to his wife and child, till after he has taken care for the ſacrifice, exhorted Paris to the fight, and diſcharged every duty to the Gods, and to his country; his love of which, as we formerly remarked, makes his chief character. What a beautiful contraſt has Homer made between the manners of Paris and thoſe of Hector, as he here ſhews them one after the other in this domeſtic light, and in their regards to the fair ſex? what a difference between the characters and behaviour of Helen and of Andromache? and what an amiable picture of conjugal love, oppoſed to that of unlawful paſſion!

Ver. 468. *Penſive ſhe ſtood on Ilion's tow'ry height.*] It is a fine imagination to repreſent the tenderneſs of Andromache for Hector, by

Beheld the war, and ſicken'd at the ſight;
There her ſad eyes in vain her lord explore,
Or weep the wounds her bleeding country bore.
But he who found not whom his ſoul deſir'd,
Whoſe virtue charm'd him as her beauty fir'd,
Stood in the gates, and aſk'd what way ſhe bent
Her parting ſtep? If to the fane ſhe went,
Where late the mourning matrons made reſort;
Or ſought her ſiſters in the Trojan court?
Not to the court, (reply'd th' attendant train)
Nor mix'd with matrons to Minerva's fane:
To Ilion's ſteepy tow'r ſhe bent her way,
To mark the fortunes of the doubtful day.
Troy fled, ſhe heard, before the Grecian ſword;
She heard and trembled for her abſent lord:
Diſtracted with ſurprize, ſhe ſeem'd to fly,
Fear on her cheek, and ſorrow in her eye.
The nurſe attended with her infant boy,
The young Aſtyanax, the hope of Troy.
Hector, this heard, return'd without delay;
Swift thro' the town he trod his former way,

by her ſtanding upon the tower of Troy, and watching all his motions in the field; even the religious proceſſion to Minerva's temple could not draw her from this place, at a time when ſhe thought her huſband in danger.

Ver. 488. *Hector, this heard, return'd.*] Hector does not ſtay to ſeek his wife on the tower of Ilion, but haſtens where the buſineſs of the field calls him. Homer is never wanting in point of honour and decency, and while he conſtantly obeys the ſtricteſt rules, finds a way to make them contribute to the beauty of his poem. Here for inſtance he has managed it ſo, that this obſervance of Hector's is the cauſe of a very pleaſing ſurprize to the reader; for at firſt he is not a little diſappointed to find that Hector does not meet Andromache, and is no leſs pleaſed afterwards to ſee them encounter by chance, which gives him a ſatisfaction he thought he had loſt. Dacier.

Thro' ſtreets of palaces, and walks of ſtate;
And met the mourner at the Scæan gate.
With haſte to meet him ſprung the joyful fair,
His blameleſs wife, Aetion's wealthy heir:
(Cilician Thebe great Aetion ſway'd,
And Hippoplacas' wide extended ſhade)
The nurſe ſtood near, in whoſe embraces preſt
His only hope hung ſmiling at her breaſt,
Whom each ſoft charm and early grace adorn,
Fair as the new-born ſtar that gilds the morn.
To this lov'd infant Hector gave the name
Scamandrius, from Scamander's honour'd ſtream;
Aſtyanax the Trojans call'd the boy,
From his great father, the defence of Troy.
Silent the warrior ſmil'd, and pleas'd reſign'd
To tender paſſions all his mighty mind:
His beauteous princeſs caſt a mournful look,
Hung on his hand, and then dejected ſpoke;
Her boſom labour'd with a boding ſigh,
And the big tear ſtood trembling in her eye.
Too daring prince! ah whither doſt thou run?
Ah too forgetful of thy wife and ſon!
And think'ſt thou not how wretched we ſhall be,
A widow I, an helpleſs orphan he!
For ſure ſuch courage length of life denies,
And thou muſt fall, thy virtue's ſacrifice.
Greece in her ſingle heroes ſtrove in vain;
Now hoſts oppoſe thee, and thou muſt be ſlain!
Oh grant me, Gods! ere Hector meets his doom,
All I can aſk of heav'n, an early tomb!
So ſhall my days in one ſad tenour run,
And end with ſorrows as they firſt begun.
No parent now remains, my griefs to ſhare,
No father's aid, no mother's tender care.
The fierce Achilles wrapt our walls in fire,
Laid Thebe waſte, and ſlew my warlike ſire!

His

His fate compaſſion in the victor bred;
Stern as he was, he yet rever'd the dead,
His radiant arms preſerv'd from hoſtile ſpoil,
And laid him decent on the fun'ral pile;
Then rais'd a mountain where his bones were burn'd,
The mountain-nymphs the rural tomb adorn'd,
Jove's ſilvan daughters bade their elms beſtow
A barren ſhade, and in his honour grow.
By the ſame arm my ſeven brave brothers fell,
In one ſad day beheld the gates of hell;
While the fat herds and ſnowy flocks they fed,
Amid their fields the hapleſs heroes bled!
My mother liv'd to bear the victor's bands,
The queen of Hippoplacia's ſylvan lands:
Redeem'd too late, ſhe ſcarce beheld again,
Her pleaſing empire and her native plain,
When ah! oppreſt by life-conſuming woe,
She fell a victim to Diana's bow.
Yet while my Hector ſtill ſurvives, I ſee
My father, mother, brethren, all in thee.
Alas! my parents, brothers, kindred, all,
Once more will periſh if my Hector fall.

Ver. 528. *His arms preſerv'd from hoſtile ſpoil.*] This circumſtance of Action's being burned with his arms, will not appear trivial in this relation, when we reflect with what eager paſſion theſe ancient heroes fought to ſpoil and carry off the armour of a vanquiſhed enemy; and therefore this action of Achilles is mentioned as an inſtance of uncommon favour and generoſity.

Ver. 532. *Jove's ſylvan daughters bade their elms beſtow—A barren ſhade*, etc.] It was the cuſtom to plant about tombs only ſuch trees as elms, alders, etc. that bear no fruit, as being moſt ſuitable to the dead. This paſſage alludes to that piece of antiquity.

Ver. 543. *A victim to Diana's bow.*] The Greeks aſcribed all ſudden deaths of women to Diana. So Ulyſſes, in Odyſſ. xi. aſks Anticlea, among the ſhades, if ſhe died by the darts of Diana? And in the preſent book, Laodame, the daughter of Bellerophon, is ſaid to have periſhed young by the arrows of this Goddeſs.

Thy wife, thy infant, in thy danger ſhare:
Oh prove a huſband's and a father's care!
That quarter moſt the ſkilful Greeks annoy,
Where yon' wild fig-trees join the wall of Troy:
Thou, from this tow'r defend th' important poſt;
There Agamemnon points his dreadful hoſt,
That paſs Tydides, Ajax, ſtrive to gain,
And there the vengeful Spartan fires his train.
Thrice our bold foes the fierce attack have giv'n,
Or led by hopes, or dictated from heav'n.
Let others in the field their arms employ,
But ſtay my Hector here, and guard his Troy.
The chief reply'd: that poſt ſhall be my care,
Nor that alone, but all the works of war.
How would the ſons of Troy, in arms renown'd,
And Troy's proud dames whoſe garments ſweep the ground,
Attaint the luſtre of my former name,
Should Hector baſely quit the field of fame!
My early youth was bred to martial pains,
My ſoul impels me to the embattel'd plains:
Let me be foremoſt to defend the throne,
And guard my father's glories, and my own.
Yet come it will, the day decreed by fates;
(How my heart trembles while my tongue relates!)

Ver. 550. *That quarter moſt——Where yon wild fig-trees.*] The artifice Andromache here uſes to detain Hector in Troy, is very beautifully imagined. She takes occaſion from the three attacks that had been made by the enemy upon this place, to give him an honourable pretence for ſtaying at that rampart to defend it. If we conſider that thoſe attempts muſt have been known to all in the city, we ſhall not think ſhe talks like a ſoldier, but like a woman, who naturally enough makes uſe of any incident that offers, to perſuade her lover to what ſhe deſires. The ignorance too which ſhe expreſſes, of the reaſons that moved the Greeks to attack this particular place, was what I doubt not Homer intended to reconcile us the more to a female character.

The

The day when thou, imperial Troy! muſt bend,
And ſee thy warriors fall, thy glories end.
And yet no dire preſage ſo wounds my mind,
My mother's death, the ruin of my kind,
Not Priam's hoary hairs defil'd with gore,
Not all my brothers gaſping on the ſhore;
As thine, Andromache! thy griefs I dread;
I ſee thee trembling, weeping, captive led!
In Argive looms our battles to deſign,
And woes, of which ſo large a part was thine!
To bear the victor's hard commands, or bring
The weight of waters from Hyperia's ſpring.
There, while you groan beneath the load of life,
They cry, Behold the mighty Hector's wife!
Some haughty Greek, who lives thy tears to ſee,
Embitters all thy woes, by naming me.
The thoughts of glory paſt, and preſent ſhame,
A thouſand griefs, ſhall waken at the name!
May I lie cold before that dreadful day,
Preſs'd with a load of monumental clay!
Thy Hector, wrapt in everlaſting ſleep,
Shall neither hear thee ſigh, nor ſee thee weep.

Thus

Ver. 583. *Hyperia's ſpring.*] Drawing water was the office of the meaneſt ſlaves. This appears by the Holy Scripture, where the Gibeonites who had deceived Joſhua are made ſlaves, and ſubjected to draw water. Joſhua pronounces the curſe againſt them in theſe words: *Now therefore ye are curſed, and there ſhall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood, and drawers of water.* Joſh. ch. ix. ver. 23. Dacier.

Ver. 595. *Stretch'd his fond arms.*] There never was a finer piece of painting than this. Hector extends his arms to embrace his child; the child, affrighted at the glittering of his helmet, and the ſhaking of the plume, ſhrinks backward to the breaſt of his nurſe; Hector unbraces his helmet, lays it on the ground, takes the infant in his arms, lifts him towards heaven, and offers a prayer for him to the Gods; then returns him to the mother Andromache, who receives him with a ſmile of pleaſure, but at the ſame inſtant

Thus having ſpoke, th' illuſtrious chief of Troy
Stretch'd his fond arms to claſp the lovely boy.
The babe clung crying to his nurſe's breaſt,
Scar'd at the dazling helm, and nodding creſt.
With ſecret pleaſure each fond parent ſmil'd,
And Hector haſted to relieve his child,
The glitt'ring terrors from his brows unbound,
And place'd the beaming helmet on the ground.
Then kiſs'd the child, and lifting high in air,
Thus to the Gods preferr'd a father's pray'r.

the fears for her huſband make her burſt into tears. All theſe are but ſmall circumſtances, but ſo artfully choſen, that every reader immediately feels the force of them, and repreſents the whole in the utmoſt liveline's to his imagination. This alone might be a confutation of that falſe criticiſm ſome have fallen into, who affirm, that a poet ought only to collect the great and noble particulars in his paintings. But it is in the images of things, as in the characters of perſons; where a ſmall action, or even a ſmall circumſtance of an action, lets us more into the knowledge and comprehenſion of them, than the material and principal parts themſelves.

Ver. 604. *Hector's prayer for his ſon.*] It may be aſked, how Hector's prayer, that his ſon might protect the Trojans, could be conſiſtent with what he had ſaid juſt before, that he certainly knew Troy and his parents would periſh. We ought to reflect that this is only a prayer: Hector, in the exceſs of a tender emotion for his ſon, intreats the Gods to preſerve Troy, and permit Aſtyanax to rule there. It is at all times allowable to beſeech Heaven to appeaſe its anger, and change its decrees; and we are taught that prayers can alter deſtiny. Dacier. Beſides, it cannot be inferred from hence, that Hector had any divine foreknowledge of his own fate, and the approaching ruin of his country; ſince in many following paſſages we find him poſſeſſed with ſtrong hopes and firm aſſurances to raiſe the ſiege, by the flight or deſtruction of the Greeks. So that theſe forebodings of his fate were only the apprehenſions and miſgivings of a ſoul dejected with ſorrow and compaſſion, by conſidering the great dangers to which he ſaw all that was dear to him expoſed.

O thou, whoſe glory fills th' æthereal throne,
And all ye deathleſs pow'rs! protect my ſon!
Grant him, like me, to purchaſe juſt renown,
To guard the Trojans, to defend the crown,
Againſt his country's foes the war to wage,
And riſe the Hector of the future age!
So when triumphant from ſucceſsful toils,
Of heroes ſlain he bears the reeking ſpoils,
Whole hoſts may hail him with deſerv'd acclaim,
And ſay, This chief tranſcends his father's fame:
While pleas'd amidſt the gen'ral ſhouts of Troy,
His mother's conſcious heart o'erflows with joy.

He ſpoke, and fondly gazing on her charms,
Reſtor'd the pleaſing burden to her arms;
Soft on her fragrant breaſt the babe ſhe laid,
Huſh'd to repoſe, and with a ſmile ſurvey'd.
The troubled pleaſure ſoon chaſtis'd by fear,
She mingled with the ſmile a tender tear.
The ſoften'd chief with kind compaſſion view'd,
And dry'd the falling drops, and thus purſu'd.

Andromache! my ſoul's far better part,
Why with untimely ſorrows heaves thy heart?
No hoſtile hand can antedate my doom,
Till fate condemns me to the ſilent tomb.

Ver. 613. *Tranſcends his father's fame.*] The commendation Hector here gives himſelf, is not only agreeable to the openneſs of a brave man, but very becoming on ſuch a ſolemn occaſion; and a natural effect from the teſtimony of his own heart to his honour, at this time eſpecially, when he knew not but he was ſpeaking his laſt words.

Ver. 625. *His mother's conſcious heart.*] Though the chief beauty of this prayer conſiſts in the paternal piety ſhewn by Hector, yet it wants not a fine ſtroke at the end, to continue him in the character of a tender lover of his wife, when he makes one of the motives of his wiſh, to be the joy ſhe muſt receive on hearing her ſon applauded.

Full

Fix'd is the term to all the race of earth,
And ſuch the hard condition of our birth:
No force can then reſiſt, no flight can ſave,
All ſink alike, the fearful and the brave.
No more——but haſten to thy taſks at home;
There guide the ſpindle, and direct the loom:
Me glory ſummons to the martial ſcene,
The field of combat is the ſphere for men
Where heroes war, the foremoſt place I claim,
The firſt in danger, as the firſt in fame:
Thus having ſaid, the glorious chief reſumes
His tow'ry helmet, black with ſhading plumes,
His princeſs parts with a prophetic ſigh;
Unwilling parts, and oft reverts her eye,
That ſtream'd at ev'ry look: then moving ſlow,
Sought her own palace, and indulg'd her woe.
There, while her tears deplor'd the godlike man,
Thro' all her train the ſoft infection ran,
The pious maids their mingled ſorrows ſhed,
And mourn the living Hector, as the dead.
But now, no longer deaf to honour's call,
Forth iſſues Paris from the palace-wall;

Ver. 628. *Fix'd is the term.*] The reaſon which Hector here urges to allay the affliction of his wife, is grounded on a very ancient and common opinion, that the fatal period of life is appointed to all men at the time of their birth; which as no precaution can avoid, ſo no danger can haſten. This ſentiment is as proper to give comfort to the diſtreſſed, as to inſpire courage to the deſponding; ſince nothing is ſo fit to quiet and ſtrengthen our minds in times of difficulty, as a firm aſſurance that our lives are expoſed to no real hazards, in the greateſt appearances of danger.

Ver. 649. *Forth iſſues Paris.*] Paris, ſtung by the reproaches of Hector, goes to the battle. It is a juſt remark of Euſtathius, that all the reproofs and remonſtrances in Homer have conſtantly their effect. The poet by this ſhews the great uſe of reprehenſions when properly applied, and finely intimates that every worthy mind will be the better for them.

In

In brazen arms that caſt a gleamy ray,
Swift thro' the town the warrior bends his way.
The wanton courſer thus, with reins unbound,
Breaks from his ſtall, and beats the trembling ground;
Pamper'd and proud, he ſeeks the wonted tides,
And laves, in height of blood, his ſhining ſides,
His head now freed, he toſſes to the ſkies;
His mane diſhevel'd o'er his ſhoulders flies;
He ſnuffs the females in the diſtant plain,
And ſprings, exulting, to his fields again.
With equal triumph, ſprightly, bold and gay,
In arms refulgent as the God of day,
The ſon of Priam, glorying in his might,
Ruſh'd forth with Hector to the fields of fight.
And now the warriors paſſing on the way,
The graceful Paris firſt excus'd his ſtay.
To whom the noble Hector thus reply'd:
O chief! in blood, and now in arms, ally'd!
Thy pow'r in war with juſtice none conteſt;
Known is thy courage, and thy ſtrength confeſt.
What pity ſloth ſhould ſeize a ſoul ſo brave,
Or godlike Paris live a woman's ſlave!
My heart weeps blood at what the Trojans ſay,
And hopes, thy deeds ſhall wipe the ſtain away.
Haſte then, in all their glorious labours ſhare;
For much they ſuffer, for thy ſake, in war.
Theſe ills ſhall ceaſe, whene'er by Jove's decree
We crown the bowl to Heav'n and Liberty:
While the proud foe his fruſtrate triumph mourns,
And Greece indignant thro' her ſeas returns.

Ver. 665. *Paris excus'd his ſtay.*] Here, in the original, is a ſhort ſpeech of Paris containing only theſe words: *Brother, I have detained you too long, and ſhould have come ſooner, as you deſired me.* This, and ſome few others of the ſame nature in the Iliad, the tranſlator has ventured to omit, expreſſing only the ſenſe of them.

THE

THE ILIAD.

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The ſingle combat of Hector and Ajax.

THE battle renewing with double ardour upon the return of Hector, Minerva is under apprehenſions for the Greeks. Apollo ſeeing her deſcend from Olympus, joins her near the Scæan gate. They agree to put off the general engagement for that day, and incite Hector to challenge the Greeks to a ſingle combat. Nine of the princes accepting the challenge, the lot is caſt, and falls upon Ajax. Theſe heroes, after ſeveral attacks, are parted by the night. The Trojans calling a council, Antenor propoſes the delivery of Helen to the Greeks, to which Paris will not conſent, but offers to reſtore them her riches. Priam ſends a herald to make this offer, and to demand a truce for burning the dead, the laſt of which only is agreed to by Agamemnon. When the funerals are performed, the Greeks, purſuant to the advice of Neſtor, erect a fortification to protect their fleet and camp, flanked with towers, and defended by a ditch and palliſades. Neptune teſtifies his jealouſy at this work, but is pacified by a promiſe from Jupiter. Both armies paſs the night in feaſting, but Jupiter diſheartens the Trojans with thunder and other ſigns of his wrath.

The three and twentieth day ends with the duel of Hector and Ajax: the next day the truce is agreed: another is taken up in the funeral rites of the ſlain; and one more in building the fortification before the ſhips. So that ſomewhat above three days is employed in this book. The ſcene lies wholly in the field.

SO

SO ſpoke the guardian of the Trojan ſtate,
Then ruſh'd impetuous thro' the Scæan gate.
Him Paris follow'd to the dire alarms;
Both breathing ſlaughter, both reſolv'd in arms.
As when to ſailors lab'ring thro' the main,
That long had heav'd the weary oar in vain,
Jove bids at length th' expected gales ariſe;
The gales blow grateful, and the veſſel flies:
So welcome theſe to Troy's deſiring train;
The bands are chear'd, the war awakes again.
Bold Paris firſt the work of death begun,
On great Meneſtheus, Areithous' ſon:
Sprung from the fair Philomeda's embrace,
The pleaſing Arne was his native place.
Then ſunk Eioneus to the ſhades below,
Beneath his ſteely caſque he felt the blow
Full on his neck, from Hector's weighty hand;
And roll'd, with limbs relax'd, along the land.
By Glaucus' ſpear the bold Iphinous bleeds,
Fix'd in the ſhoulder as he mounts his ſteeds;
Headlong he tumbles: his ſlack nerves unbound,
Drop the cold uſeleſs members on the ground.

Ver. 2. *Thro' the Scæan gate.*] This gate is not here particulariſed by Homer, but it appears by the 491ſt verſe of the ſixth book, that it could be no other. Euſtathius takes notice of the difference of the words ἰέναντο and κίε, the one applied to Hector, the other to Paris: by which the motion of the former is deſcribed as an impetuous ſallying forth, agreeable to the violence of a warrior; and that of the latter as a calmer movement correſpondent to the gentler character of a lover. But perhaps this remark is too refined, ſince Homer plainly gives Paris a character of bravery in what immediately precedes and follows this verſe.

Ver. 5. *As when to ſailors*, etc.] This ſimile makes it plain that the battle had relaxed during the abſence of Hector in Troy; and conſequently that the converſation of Diomed and Glaucus, in the former book, was not (as Homer's cenſurers would have it) in the heat of the engagement.

When

When now Minerva ſaw her Argives ſlain,
From vaſt Olympus to the gleaming plain
Fierce ſhe deſcends: Apollo mark'd her flight,
Nor ſhot leſs ſwift from Ilion's tow'ry height:
Radiant they met, beneath the beechen ſhade;
When thus Apollo to the blue-ey'd maid.

What cauſe, O daughter of almighty Jove!
Thus wings thy progreſs from the realms above?
Once more impetuous doſt thou bend thy way,
To give to Greece the long divided day?
Too much has Troy already felt thy hate,
Now breathe thy rage, and huſh the ſtern debate:
This day, the buſ'neſs of the field ſuſpend:
War ſoon ſhall kindle, and great Ilion bend;
Since vengeful Goddeſſes confed'rate join
To raze her walls, tho' built by hands divine.

To whom the progeny of Jove replies:
I left, for this, the council of the ſkies:
But who ſhall bid conflicting hoſts forbear,
What art ſhall calm the furious ſons of war?
To her the God: Great Hector's ſoul incite
To dare the boldeſt Greek to ſingle fight,
'Till Greece, provok'd, from all her numbers ſhow
A warrior worthy to be Hector's foe.

At this agreed, the heav'nly powers withdrew;
Sage Helenus their ſecret counſels knew;

Hector

Ver. 23. *When now Minerva*, etc.] This machine of the two deities meeting to part the two armies is very noble. Euſtathius tells us it is an allegorical Minerva and Apollo: Minerva repreſents the prudent valour of the Greeks, and Apollo who ſtood for the Trojans, the power of deſtiny: ſo that the meaning of the allegory may be, that the valour and wiſdom of the Greeks had now conquered Troy, had not deſtiny withſtood. Minerva therefore complies with Apollo, an intimation that wiſdom can never oppoſe fate.

Ver. 48. *Sage Helenus their ſacred counſels knew.*] Helenus was the

prieſt

Hector inſpir'd he fought; to him addreſt,
Thus told the dictates of his ſacred breaſt.
O ſon of Priam! let thy faithful ear
Receive my words; thy friend and brother hear!
Go forth perſuaſive, and a while engage
The warring nations to ſuſpend their rage;
Then dare the boldeſt of the hoſtile train
To mortal combat on the liſted plain.
For not this day ſhall end thy glorious date;
The Gods have ſpoke it, and their voice is fate.
He ſaid: the warrior heard the word with joy;
Then with his ſpear reſtrain'd the youth of Troy,
Held by the midſt athwart. On either hand
The ſquadrons part; th' expecting Trojans ſtand,

prieſt of Apollo, and might therefore be ſuppoſed to be informed of this by his God, or taught by an oracle, that ſuch was his will. Or elſe being an augur, he might learn it from the flight of thoſe birds, into which the Deities are here feigned to transform themſelves, (perhaps for that reaſon, as it would be a very poetical manner of expreſſing it.) The fiction of theſe divinities ſitting on the beech-tree in the ſhape of vultures, is imitated by Milton in the fourth book of Paradiſe Loſt, where Satan, leaping over the boundaries of Eden, ſits in the form of a cormorant upon the tree of life.

Ver. 57. *For not this day ſhall end thy glorious date.*] Euſtathius juſtly obſerves, that Homer here takes from the greatneſs of Hector's intrepidity, by making him foreknow that he ſhould not fall in this combat; whereas Ajax encounters him without any ſuch encouragement.

Ver. 60. *Then with his ſpear reſtrain'd the youth of Troy, Held by the midſt athwart.*] The remark of Euſtathius here is obſervable: he tells us, that the warriors of thoſe times (having no trumpets, and becauſe the voice of the loudeſt herald would be drowned in the noiſe of a battle) addreſſed themſelves to the eyes, and that graſping the middle of the ſpear denoted a requeſt, that the fight might be a while ſuſpended, the holding the ſpear in that poſition not being the poſture of a warrior; and thus Agamemnon underſtands it without any farther explication. But however it be, we have a lively picture of a general who ſtretches his ſpear acroſs, and preſſes back the advanced ſoldiers of his army.

Great Agamemnon bids the Greeks forbear;
They breathe, and huſh the tumult of the war.
Th' Athenian maid, and glorious god of day,
With ſilent joy the ſettling hoſts ſurvey:
In form of vultures, on the beech's height
They ſit conceal'd, and wait the future fight.
The thronging troops obſcure the duſky fields,
Horrid with briſtling ſpears, and gleaming ſhields.
As when a gen'ral darkneſs veils the main.
(Soft Zephyr curling the wide wat'ry plain)
The waves ſcarce heaves, the face of Ocean ſleeps,
And ſtill a horror ſaddens all the deeps:
Thus in thick orders ſettling wide around,
At length compos'd they ſit, and ſhade the ground.
Great Hector firſt amidſt both armies broke
The ſolemn ſilence, and their pow'rs beſpoke.
Hear all ye Trojans, all ye Grecian bands, [mands,
What my ſoul prompts, and what ſome God com-

Ver. 71. *As when a gen'ral darkneſs*, etc.] The thick ranks of the troops compoſing themſelves, in order to ſit and hear what Hector was about to propoſe, are compared to the waves of the ſea, juſt ſtirred by the weſt wind; the ſimile partly conſiſting in the darkneſs and ſtillneſs.

Ver. 79. *Hear all ye Trojan, all ye Grecian bands.*] The appearance of Hector, his formal challenge, and the affright of the Greeks upon it, have a near reſemblance to the deſcription of the challenge of Goliah in the firſt book of Samuel, ch. xvii. *And he ſtood and cried to the armies of Iſrael!——Chuſe you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your ſervants; but if I prevail againſt him, and kill him, then ſhall ye be our ſervants.——When Saul and all Iſrael heard the words of the Philiſtine, they were greatly diſmayed, and greatly afraid*, etc.

There is a fine air of gallantry and bravery in this challenge of Hector. If he ſeems to ſpeak too vainly, we ſhould conſider him under the character of a challenger, whoſe buſineſs it is to defy the enemy. Yet at the ſame time we find a decent modeſty in his manner of expreſſing the conditions of the combat: he ſays ſimply, *If my enemy kills me*; but of himſelf, *If Apollo grant me victory.*

Great

Great Jove, averſe our warfare to compoſe,
O'erwhelms the nations with new toils and woes;
War with a fiercer tide once more returns,
'Till Ilion falls, or 'till yon' navy burns.
You then, O princes of the Greeks! appear;
'Tis Hector ſpeaks, and calls the Gods to hear:
From all your troops ſelect the boldeſt knight,
And him, the boldeſt, Hector dare to fight.
Here if I fall, by chance of battle ſlain,
Be his my ſpoil, and his theſe arms remain;
But let my body, to my friends return'd,
By Trojan hands and Trojan flames be burn'd.
And if Apollo, in whoſe aid I truſt,
Shall ſtretch your daring champion in the duſt;
If mine the glory to deſpoil the foe;
On Phœbus' temple I'll his arms beſtow;
The breathleſs carcaſe to your navy ſent,
Greece on the ſhore ſhall raiſe a monument;
Which when ſome future mariner ſurveys,
Waſh'd by broad Helleſpont's reſounding ſeas,
Thus ſhall he ſay, "A valiant Greek lies there,
"By Hector ſlain, the mighty man of war."

Ver 96. *On Phœbus' temple I'll his arms beſtow.*] It was the manner of the ancients to dedicate trophies of this kind to the temples of the Gods. The particular reaſon for conſecrating the arms in this place to Apollo, is not only as he was the conſtant protector of Troy, but as this thought of the challenge was inſpired by him.

Ver. 98. *Greece on the ſhore ſhall raiſe a monument.*] Homer took the hint of this from ſeveral tombs of the ancient heroes who had fought at Troy, remaining in his time upon the ſhore of the Helleſpont. He gives that ſea the epithet *broad*, to diſtinguiſh the particular place of thoſe tombs, which was on the Rhœtean or Sigæan coaſt, where the Helleſpont (which in other parts is narrow) opens itſelf to the Ægæan ſea. Strabo gives an account of the monument of Ajax near Rhœteum, and of Achilles at the promontory of Sigæum. This is one among a thouſand proofs of our author's exact knowledge in geography and antiquities.

The ſtone ſhall tell your vanquiſh'd hero's name,
And diſtant ages learn the victor's fame.
This fierce defiance Greece aſtoniſh'd heard,
Bluſh'd to refuſe, and to accept it fear'd.
Stern Menelaus firſt the ſilence broke,
And inly groaning, thus opprobrious ſpoke.
Women of Greece! Oh ſcandal of your race,
Whoſe coward ſouls your manly form diſgrace.
How great the ſhame, when ev'ry age ſhall know
That not a Grecian met this noble foe!
Go then! reſolve to earth, from whence ye grew,
A heartleſs, ſpiritleſs, inglorious crew!
Be what ye ſeem, unanimated clay!
Myſelf will dare the danger of the day.
'Tis man's bold taſk the gen'rous ſtrife to try,
But in the hands of God is victory.
Theſe words ſcarce ſpoke, with gen'rous ardour preſt,
His manly limbs in azure arms he dreſt:
That day, Atrides! a ſuperior hand
Had ſtretch'd thee breathleſs on the hoſtile ſtrand!
But all at once, thy fury to compoſe,
The kings of Greece, an awful band, aroſe:

Ver. 105. *Greece aſtoniſh'd heard.*] It ſeems natural to inquire, why the Greeks, before they accepted Hector's challenge, did not demand reparation for the former treachery of Pandarus, and inſiſt upon the delivering up the author of it; which had been the ſhorteſt way for the Trojans to have wiped off that ſtain: it was very reſonable for the Greeks to reply to this challenge, that they could not venture a ſecond ſingle combat, for fear of ſuch another inſidious attempt upon their champion. And indeed I wonder, that Neſtor did not think of this excuſe for his countrymen, when they were ſo backward to engage.

Ver. 109. *Women of Greece*, etc.] There is a great deal of fire in this ſpeech of Menelaus, which very well agrees with his character and circumſtances. Methink, while he ſpeaks, one ſees him in a poſture of emotion, pointing with contempt at the commanders about him.

Ev'n

Ev'n he their chief, great Agamemnon, preſs'd,
Thy daring hand, and this advice addreſs'd.
Whither, O Menelaus! would'ſt thou run,
And tempt a fate, which prudence bids thee ſhun?
Griev'd tho' thou art, forbear the raſh deſign;
Great Hector's arm is mightier far than thine.
Ev'n fierce Achilles learn'd its force to fear,
And trembling met this dreadful ſon of war.
Sit thou ſecure amidſt thy ſocial band;
Greece in our cauſe ſhall arm ſome pow'rful hand.
The mightieſt warrior of the Achaian name,
Tho' bold, and burning with deſire of fame,
Content the doubtful honour might forego,
So great the danger, and ſo brave the foe.
He ſaid, and turn'd his brother's vengeful mind;
He ſtoop'd to reaſon, and his rage reſign'd,
No longer bent to ruſh on certain harms;
His joyful friends unbrace his azure arms.
He, from whoſe lips divine perſuaſion flows,
Grave Neſtor, then, in graceful act aroſe,

Ver. 131. *Ev'n fierce Achilles learn'd his force to fear.*] The poet every where takes occaſion to ſet the brotherly love of Agamemnon toward Menelaus in the moſt agreeable light: when Menelaus is wounded, Agamemnon is more concerned than he; and here diſſuades him from a danger, which he offers immediately after to undertake himſelf. He makes uſe of Hector's ſuperior courage to bring him to a compliance; and tells him that even Achilles dares not engage with Hector.

Ver. 135. *The mightieſt warrior*, etc.] It cannot with certainty be concluded from the words of Homer, who is the perſon to whom Agamemnon applies the laſt lines of this ſpeech: the interpreters leave it as undetermined in their tranſlations as it is in the original. Some would have it underſtood of Hector, that the Greeks would ſend ſuch an antagoniſt againſt him, from whoſe hands Hector might be glad to eſcape. But this interpretation ſeems contrary to the plain deſign of Agamemnon's diſcourſe, which only aims to deter his brother from ſo raſh an undertaking as engaging with Hector.

Thus to the kings he ſpoke. What grief, what ſhame
Attend on Greece, and all the Grecian name?
How ſhall, alas! her hoary heroes mourn
Their ſons degen'rate, and their race a ſcorn?
What tears ſhall down thy ſilver beard be roll'd,
Oh Peleus, old in arms, in wiſdom old!
Once with what joy the gen'rous prince would hear
Of ev'ry chief who fought this glorious war,
Participate their fame, and pleas'd inquire
Each name, each action, and each heroes fire!
Gods! ſhould he ſee our warriors trembling ſtand,
And trembling all before one hoſtile hand;
How would he lift his aged arms on high,
Lament inglorious Greece, and beg to die!
Oh! would to all th' immortal pow'rs above,
Minerva, Phœbus, and almighty Jove!
Years might again roll back, my youth renew,
And give this arm the ſpring which once it knew:
When fierce in war, where Jardan's waters fall
I led my troops to Phea's trembling wall,
And with th' Arcadian ſpears my proweſs try'd,
Where Cæladon rolls down his rapid tide.

Ver. 145. *The ſpeech of Neſtor.*] This ſpeech, if we conſider the occaſion of it, could be made by no perſon but Neſtor. No young warrior could with decency exhort others to undertake a combat which he himſelf declined. Nothing could be more in his character than to repreſent to the Greeks how much they would ſuffer in the opinion of another old man like himſelf. In naming Peleus he ſets before their eyes the expectations of all their fathers, and the ſhame that muſt afflict them in their old age, if their ſons behaved themſelves unworthily. The account he gives of the converſations he had formerly held with that king, and his jealouſy for the glory of Greece, is a very natural picture of the warm dialogues of two old warriors upon the commencement of a new war. Upon the whole, Neſtor never more diſplays his oratory than in this place: you ſee him riſing with a ſigh, expreſſing a pathetic ſorrow, and wiſhing again for his youth, that he might wipe away this diſgrace from his country.

There

There Ereuthalion brav'd us in the field,
Proud Areithous' dreadful arms to weild;
Great Areithous, known from ſhore to ſhore
By the huge, knotted, iron mace he bore;
No lance he ſhook, nor bent the twanging bow,
But broke, with this, the battle of the foe.
Him not by manly force Lycurgus ſlew,
Whoſe guileful jav'lin from the thicket flew,
Deep in a winding way his breaſt aſſail'd,
Nor aught the warrior's thund'ring mace avail'd.
Supine he fell: thoſe arms which Mars before
Had giv'n the vanquiſh'd, now the victor bore:
But when old age had dimm'd Lycurgus' eyes,
To Ereuthalion he conſigns the prize.
Furious with this, he cruſh'd our levell'd bands,
And dar'd the trial of the ſtrongeſt hands;
Nor could the ſtrongeſt hands his fury ſtay:
All ſaw, and fear'd, his huge tempeſtuous ſway.
'Till I, the youngeſt of the hoſt, appear'd,
And youngeſt, met whom all our army fear'd.
I fought the chief: my arms Minerva crown'd:
Prone fell the giant o'er a length of ground.
What then he was, oh were your Neſtor now!
Not Hector's ſelf ſhould want an equal foe.
But warriors, you, that youthful vigour boaſt,
The flow'r of Greece, th' examples of our hoſt,

Ver. 177. *Thoſe arms which Mars before had given,*] Homer has the peculiar happineſs of being able to raiſe the obſcureſt circumſtance into the ſtrongeſt point of light. Areithous had taken theſe arms in battle, and this gives occaſion to our author to ſay they were the preſent of Mars. Euſtathius.

Ver. 188. *Prone fell the giant o'er a length of ground.*] Neſtor's inſiſting upon this circumſtance of the fall of Ereuthalion, which paints his vaſt body lying extended on the earth, has a particular beauty in it, and recalls into the old man's mind the joy he felt on the ſight of his enemy after he was ſlain. Theſe are the fine and natural ſtrokes that give life to the deſcriptions of poetry.

Sprunz

Sprung from ſuch fathers, who ſuch numbers ſway,
Can you ſtand trembling, and deſert the day?
His warm reproofs the liſt'ning kings inflame;
And nine, the nobleſt of the Grecian name,
Upſtarted fierce: But far before the reſt
The king of man advanc'd his dauntleſs breaſt:
Then bold Tydides, great in arms, appear'd;
And next his bulk gigantic Ajax rear'd:
Oileus follow'd; Idomen was there,
And Merion, dreadful as the God of war:
With theſe Eurypylus and Thoas ſtand,
And wiſe Ulyſſes clos'd the daring band.
All theſe, alike inſpir'd with noble rage,
Demand the fight. To whom the Pylian ſage:
Leſt thirſt of glory your brave ſouls divide,
What chief ſhall combat, let the lots decide.
Whom heav'n ſhall chuſe, be his the chance to raiſe
His country's fame, his own immortal praiſe.
The lots produc'd, each hero ſigns his own;
Then in the gen'ral's helm the fates are thrown.

Ver. 196. *And nine, the nobleſt*, etc. In this catalogue of the nine warriors, who offer themſelves as champions for Greece, one may take notice of the firſt and the laſt who riſes up. Agamemnon advanced foremoſt, as it beſt became the general, and Ulyſſes, with his uſual caution, took time to deliberate until ſeven more had offered themſelves. Homer gives a great encomium of the eloquence of Neſtor, in making it produce ſo ſudden an effect; eſpecially when Agamemnon, who did not proffer himſelf before, even to ſave his brother, is now the firſt that ſteps forth: one would fancy this particular circumſtance was contrived to ſhew, that eloquence has a greater power than even nature itſelf.

Ver. 208. *Let the lots decide.*] This was a very prudent piece of conduct in Neſtor: he does not chuſe any of theſe nine himſelf, but leaves the determination intirely to chance. Had he named the hero, the reſt might have been grieved to have ſeen another preferred before them; and he well knew, that the lot could not fall upon a wrong perſon, where all were valiant. Euſtathius.

The

The people pray, with lifted eyes and hands,
And vows like these ascend from all the bands.
Grant, thou Almighty! in whose hand is fate,
A worthy champion for the Grecian state.
This task let Ajax or Tydides prove,
Or he, the king of kings, belov'd by Jove.
Old Nestor shook the casque. By heav'n inspir'd,
Leap'd forth the lot, of ev'ry Greek desir'd.
This from the right to left the herald bears,
Held out in order to the Grecian peers:
Each to his rival yields the mark unknown,
'Till godlike Ajax finds the lot his own;
Surveys th' inscription with rejoicing eyes,
Then casts before him, and with transport cries:
Warriors! I claim the lot, and arm with joy;
Be mine the conquest of this chief of Troy.
Now, while my brightest arms my limbs invest,
To Saturn's son be all your vows addrest:
But pray in secret, lest the foes should hear,
And deem your pray'rs the mean effect of fear.
Said I in secret? No, your vows declare,
In such a voice as fills the earth and air.
Lives there a chief whom Ajax ought to dread,
Ajax, in all the toils of battle bred?
From warlike Salamis I drew my birth,
And born to combats, fear no force of earth.

Ver. 225. *Surveys th' inscription.*] There is no necessity to suppose, that they put any letters upon these lots, at least not their names, because the herald could not tell to whom the lot of Ajax belonged, until he claimed it himself. It is more probable that they made some private mark or signet each upon his own lot. The lot was only a piece of wood, a shell, or any thing that lay at hand. Eustathius.

Ver. 227. *Warriors! I claim the lot.*] This is the first speech of Ajax in the Iliad. He is no orator, but always expresses himself in short; generally bragging or threatening; and very positive.

He

He ſaid. The troops, with elevated eyes,
Implore the God whoſe thunder rends the ſkies.
O father of mankind, ſuperior lord!
On lofty Ida's holy hill ador'd:
Who in the higheſt heav'n has fix'd thy throne,
Supreme of Gods! unbounded, and alone:
Grant thou, that Telamon may bear away
The praiſe and conqueſt of this doubtful day;
Or if illuſtrious Hector be thy care,
That both may claim it, and that both may ſhare.
Now Ajax brace'd his dazling armour on;
Sheath'd in bright ſteel the giant-warrior ſhone:
He moves to combat with majeſtic pace;
So ſtalks in arms the grizly God of Thrace,
When Jove to puniſh faithleſs men prepares,
And gives whole nations to the waſte of wars.
Thus march'd the chief, tremendous as a God;
Grimly he ſmil'd; earth trembled as he ſtrode:
His maſſy jav'lin quiv'ring in his hand,
He ſtood, the bulwark of the Grecian band.
Thro' ev'ry Argive heart new tranſport ran;
All Troy ſtood trembling at the mighty man.
Ev'n Hector paus'd; and with new doubt oppreſt,
Felt his great heart ſuſpended in his breaſt:
'Twas vain to ſeek retreat, and vain to fear;
Himſelf had challenge'd, and the foe drew near.

Ver. 251. *He moves to combat.*] This deſcription is full of the ſublime imagery ſo peculiar to our author. The Grecian champion is drawn in all that terrible glory with which he equals his heroes to the Gods: he is no leſs dreadful than Mars moving to battle, to execute the decrees of Jove upon mankind, and determine the fate of nations. His march, his poſture, his countenance, his bulk, his tower-like ſhield; in a word, his whole figure, ſtrikes our eyes in all the ſtrongeſt colours of poetry. We look upon him as a deity, and are not aſtoniſhed at thoſe emotions which Hector feels at the ſight of him.

Stern.

Stern Telamon behind his ample ſhield,
As from a brazen tow'r, o'erlook'd the field.
Huge was its orb, with ſev'n thick folds o'ercaſt,
Of tough bull-hides; of ſolid braſs the laſt.
(The work of Tychius, who in Hyle dwell'd,
And all in arts of armoury excell'd.)
This Ajax bore before his manly breaſt,
And threat'ning, thus his adverſe chief addreſt.
Hector! approach my arm, and ſingly know
What ſtrength thou haſt, and what the Grecian foe.
Achilles ſhuns the fight; yet ſome there are,
Not void of ſoul, and not unſkill'd in war:
Let him, unactive, on the ſea-beat ſhore,
Indulge his wrath, and aid our arms no more;

Ver. 269. *The work of Tychius.*] I ſhall aſk leave to tranſcribe here the ſtory of this Tychius, as we have it in the ancient *Life of Homer*, attributed to Herodotus. "Homer, falling into poverty, "determined to go to Cuma, and as he paſt through the plain of "Hermus, came to a place called *the new wall*, which was a co- "lony of the Cumæans. Here (after he had recited five verſes in "celebration of Cuma) he was received by a leather-dreſſer, whoſe "name was Tychius, into his houſe, where he ſhewed to his hoſt "and his company, a poem on the expedition of Amphiarus, and "his hymns. The admiration he there obtained procured him a "preſent ſubſiſtence. They ſhew to this day with great venera- "tion the place where he ſat when he recited his verſes, and a "poplar which they affirm to have grown there in his time."

Ver. 270. *In arts of armoury.*] I have called Tychius an armourer, rather than a leather-dreſſer or currier; his making the ſhield of Ajax authorizes one expreſſion as well as the other; and though that which Homer uſes had no lowneſs or vulgarity in the Greek, it is not to be admitted into Engliſh heroic verſe.

Ver. 275. *Hector! approach my arm*, etc.] I think it needleſs to obſerve how exactly this ſpeech of Ajax correſponds with his blunt and ſoldier like character. The ſame propriety, in regard to this hero, is maintained throughout the Iliad. The buſineſs he is about is all that employs his head, and he ſpeaks of nothing but fighting. The laſt line is an image of his mind at all times.

No more—be ſudden, and begin the fight.

Whole

Whole troops of heroes Greece has yet to boaſt,
And ſends thee one, a ſample of her hoſt.
Such as I am, I come to prove thy might;
No more——be ſudden, and begin the fight.
O ſon of Telamon, thy country's pride!
(To Ajax thus the Trojan prince reply'd)
Me, as a boy or woman, wouldſt thou fright,
New to the field, and trembling at the fight?
Thou meet'ſt a chief deſerving of thy arms,
To combat born, and bred amidſt alarms:
I know to ſhift my ground, remount the car,
Turn, charge, and anſwer ev'ry call of war;
To right, to left, the dext'rous lance I wield,
And bear thick battle on my ſounding ſhield.
But open be our fight, and bold each blow;
I ſteal no conqueſt from a noble foe.
He ſaid, and riſing, high above the field
Whirl'd the long lance againſt the ſev'nfold ſhield.
Full on the braſs deſcending from above
Thro' ſix bull-hides the furious weapon drove,
Till in the ſeventh it fix'd. Then Ajax threw:
Thro' Hector's ſhield the forceful jav'lin flew,
His corſlet enters, and his garment rends,
And glancing downwards near his flank deſcends.

Ver. 285. *Me, as a boy or woman, wouldſt thou fright.*] This reply of Hector ſeems rather to allude to ſome geſture Ajax had uſed in his approach to him, *as ſhaking his ſpear*, or the like, than to any thing he had ſaid in his ſpeech. For what he had told him amounts to no more, than that there were ſeveral in the Grecian army who had courted the honour of this combat as well as himſelf. I think one muſt obſerve many things of this kind in Homer, that allude to the particular attitude or action, in which the author ſuppoſes the perſon to be at that time.

Ver. 290. *Turn, charge, and anſwer ev'ry call of war.*] The Greek is, *To move my feet to the ſound of Mars*, which ſeem to ſhew that thoſe military dances were in uſe even in Homer's time, which were afterwards practiſed in Greece.

The

The wary Trojan ſhrinks, and bending low
Beneath his buckler, diſappoints the blow.
From their bor'd ſhields the chiefs their jav'lins drew,
Then cloſe impetuous, and the charge renew:
Fierce as the mountain-lions bath'd in blood,
Or foaming boars, the terror of the wood.
At Ajax Hector his long lance extends;
The blunted point againſt the buckler bends.
But Ajax watchful as his foe drew near,
Drove thro' the Trojan targe the knotty ſpear;
It reach'd his neck, with matchleſs ſtrength impell'd;
Spouts the black gore, and dims his ſhining ſhield.
Yet ceas'd not Hector thus; but, ſtooping down,
In his ſtrong hand up-heav'd a flinty ſtone,
Black, craggy, vaſt: to this his force he bends;
Full on the brazen boſs the ſtone deſcends;
The hollow braſs reſounded with the ſhock.
Then Ajax ſeiz'd the fragment of a rock,
Apply'd each nerve, and ſwinging round on high,
With force tempeſtuous let the ruin fly:
The huge ſtone thund'ring thro' his buckler broke:
His ſlacken'd knees receiv'd the numbing ſtroke;
Great Hector falls extended on the field,
His bulk ſupporting on the ſhatter'd ſhield;
Nor wanted heav'nly aid: Apollo's might
Confirm'd his ſinews, and reſtor'd to fight.

And

Ver. 305. *From their bor'd ſhields their jav'lins drew.*] Homer in this combat makes his heroes perform all their exerciſes with all ſorts of weapons; firſt, darting lances at a diſtance, then advancing cloſer, and puſhing with ſpears, then caſting ſtones, and, laſtly, attacking with ſwords; in every one of which the poet gives the ſuperiority to his countryman. It is farther obſervable, (as Euſtathius remarks) that Ajax allows Hector an advantage in throwing the firſt ſpear.

Ver. 327. *Apollo's might.*] In the beginning of this book, we left Apollo perched upon a tree, in the ſhape of a vulture, to behold

And now both heroes their broad faulchions drew:
In flaming circles round their heads they flew;
But then by heralds voice the word was giv'n,
The ſacred miniſters of earth and heav'n:
Divine Talthybius whom the Greeks employ,
And ſage Idæus on the part of Troy,
Between the ſwords, their peaceful ſceptres rear'd;
And firſt Idæus' awful voice was heard.

Forbear, my ſons! your farther force to prove,
Both dear to men, and both belov'd of Jove.
To either hoſt your matchleſs worth is known,
Each ſounds your praiſe, and war is all your own.
But now the night extends her awful ſhade;
The Goddeſs parts you: be the night obey'd.

To whom great Ajax his high ſoul expreſs'd
O ſage! to Hector be theſe words addreſs'd.
Let him, who firſt provok'd our chiefs to fight,
Let him demand the ſanction of the night;
If firſt he aſk it, I content obey,
And ceaſe the ſtrife when Hector ſhows the way.

the combat: he comes now very opportunely to ſave his favourite Hector. Euſtathius ſays that Apollo is the ſame with Deſtiny; ſo that when Homer ſays Apollo ſaved him, he means no more than that it was not his fate yet to die, as Helenus had foretold him.

Ver. 331. *Heralds, the ſacred miniſters.*] The heralds of old were ſacred perſons, accounted the delegates of Mercury, and inviolable by the law of nations. The ancient hiſtories have many examples of the ſeverity exerciſed againſt thoſe who committed any outrage upon them. Their office was to aſſiſt in the ſacrifices and councils, to proclaim war or peace, to command ſilence at ceremonies or ſingle combats, to part the combatants, and to declare the conqueror, &c.

Ver. 336. *And firſt Idæus.*] Homer obſerves a juſt decorum in making Idæus the Trojan herald ſpeak firſt, to end the combat wherein Hector had the diſadvantage. Ajax is very ſenſible of this difference, when in his reply he requires that Hector ſhould firſt aſk for a ceſſation, as he was the challenger.

Oh

Oh firſt of Greeks! (his noble foe rejoin'd)
Whom heav'n adorns, ſuperior to thy kind,
With ſtrength of body, and with worth of mind!
Now martial law commands us to forbear;
Hereafter we ſhall meet in glorious war.
Some future day ſhall lengthen out the ſtriſe,
And let the Gods decide of death or life!
Since then the night extends her gloomy ſhade,
And Heav'n enjoins it, be the night obey'd.
Return, brave Ajax, to thy Grecian friends,
And joy the nations whom thy arm defends;
As I ſhall glad each chief, and Trojan wife,
Who wearies Heav'n with vows for Hector's life.
But let us, on this memorable day,
Exchange ſome gift; that Greece and Troy may ſay,
"Not hate, but glory, made theſe chiefs contend;
"And each brave foe was in his ſoul a friend."
With that, a ſword with ſtars of ſilver grace'd,
The baldric ſtudded, and the ſheath enchas'd,
He gave the Greek. The gen'rous Greek beſtow'd
A radiant belt that rich with purple glow'd.

Ver. 349. *Oh firſt of Greeks*, &c.] Hector, how hardly ſoever he is preſt by his preſent circumſtances, ſays nothing to obtain a truce that is not ſtrictly conſiſtent with his honour. When he praiſes Ajax, it leſſens his own diſadvantage, and he is careful to extol him only above the Greeks, without acknowledging him more valiant than himſelf or the Trojans: Hector is always jealous of the honour of his country. In what follows we ſee he keeps himſelf on a level with his adverſary; "Hereafter we ſhall meet. --- Go "thou, and give the ſame joy to thy Grecians for thy eſcape, as "I ſhall to my Trojans." The point of honour in all this is very nicely preſerved.

Ver. 363. *Exchange ſome gift.*] There is nothing that gives us a greater pleaſure in reading an heroic poem, than the generoſity which one brave enemy ſhews to another. The propoſal here made by Hector, and ſo readily embraced by Ajax, makes the parting of theſe two heroes more glorious to them than the continuance of the combate could have been.

Then with majeſtic grace they quit the plain;
This ſeeks the Grecian, that the Phrygian train.
The Trojan bands returning Hector wait,
And hail with joy the champion of their ſtate:
Eſcap'd great Ajax, they ſurvey'd him round,
Alive, unharm'd, and vig'rous from his wound.
To Troy's high gates the Godlike man they bear,
Their preſent triumph, as their late deſpair.
But Ajax, glorying in his hardy deed,
The well-arm'd Greeks to Agamemnon lead.
A ſteer for ſacrifice the king deſign'd,
Of full five years, and of the nobler kind.
The victim falls; they ſtrip the ſmoaking hide,
The beaſt they quarter, and the joints divide;
Then ſpread the tables, the repaſt prepare,
Each takes his ſeat, and each receives his ſhare.
The king himſelf (an honorary ſign)
Before great Ajax place'd the mighty chine.
When now the rage of hunger was remov'd;
Neſtor, in each perſuaſive art approv'd,
The ſage whoſe counſels long had ſway'd the reſt,
In words like theſe his prudent thought expreſt.
How dear, O kings! this fatal day has coſt,
What Greeks are periſh'd! what a people loſt!

Ver. 387. *Before great Ajax place'd the mighty chine.*] This is one of thoſe paſſages that will naturally fall under the ridicule of a true modern critic. But what Agamemnon here beſtows on Ajax was in former times a great mark of reſpect and honour; not only as it was cuſtomary to diſtinguiſh the quality of their gueſts, by the largeneſs of the portions aſſigned them at their tables, but as this part of the victim peculiarly belonged to the king himſelf. It is worth remarking on this occaſion, that the ſimplicity of thoſe times allowed the eating of no other fleſh but beef, mutton, or kid: this is the food of the heroes of Homer, and the patriarchs and warriors of the Old Teſtament. Fiſhing and fowling were the arts of more luxurious nations, and came much later into Greece and Iſrael.

What

What tides of blood have drench'd Scamander's ſhore!
What crouds of heroes ſunk, to riſe no more!
Then hear me, chief! nor let the morrow's light
Awake thy ſquadrons to new toils of fight:
Some ſpace at leaſt permit the war to breathe,
While we to flames our ſlaughter'd friends bequeathe.
From the red field their ſcatter'd bodies bear,
And nigh the fleet a fun'ral ſtructure rear;
So decent urns their ſnowy bones may keep,
And pious children o'er their aſhes weep.
Here, where on one promiſcuous pile they blaz'd,
High o'er them all a gen'ral tomb be rais'd;
Next, to ſecure our camp, and naval pow'rs,
Raiſe an embattel'd wall, with lofty tow'rs;
From ſpace to ſpace be ample gates around,
For paſſing chariots, and a trench profound.
So Greece to combat ſhall in ſafety go,
Nor fear the fierce incurſions of the foe.
'Twas thus the ſage his wholſome counſel mov'd;
The ſceptred kings of Greece his words approv'd.
Meanwhile, conven'd at Priam's palace gate,
The Trojan peers in nightly council ſat:
A ſenate void of order, as of choice,
Their hearts were fearful, and confus'd their voice.
Antenor riſing, thus demands their ear:
Ye Trojans, Dardans, and auxiliars hear!

Ver. 399. *While we to flames, &c.*] There is a great deal of artifice in this conduct of Neſtor, of burning the dead, and raiſing a fortification; for though piety was the ſpecious pretext, their ſecurity was the real aim of the truce, which they made uſe of to finiſh their works. Their doing this at the ſame time they erected the funeral piles, made the impoſition eaſy upon the enemy, who might naturally miſtake one work for the other. And this alſo obviates a plain objection, *viz.* Why the Trojans did not interrupt them in this work? the truce determined no exact time, but as much as was needful for diſcharging the rites of the dead.

'Tis Heav'n the counſel of my breaſt inſpires,
And I but move what ev'ry God requires:
Let Sparta's treaſures be this hour reſtor'd,
And Argive Helen own her ancient lord.
The ties of faith, the ſworn alliance broke,
Our impious battles the juſt Gods provoke.
As this advice ye practiſe, or reject,
So hope ſucceſs, or dread the dire effect.

The ſenior ſpoke, and ſat. To whom reply'd
The graceful huſband of the Spartan bride.
Cold counſels, Trojan, may become thy years,
But ſound ungrateful in a warrior's ears:
Old man, if void of fallacy or art
Thy words expreſs the purpoſe of thy heart,
Thou, in thy time, more ſound advice haſt giv'n;
But wiſdom has its date, aſſign'd by heav'n.
Then hear me, princes of the Trojan name!
Their treaſures I'll reſtore, but not the dame;
My treaſures too, for peace, I will reſign;
But be this bright poſſeſſion ever mine.

'Twas then, the growing diſcord to compoſe,
Slow from his ſeat the rev'rend Priam roſe:
His Godlike aſpect deep attention drew:
He paus'd, and theſe pacific words enſue.

Ye Trojans, Dardans, and auxiliar bands!
Now take refreſhment as the hour demands:
Guard well the walls, relieve the watch of night,
Till the new ſun reſtores the chearful light:
Then ſhall our herald to th' Atrides ſent,
Before their ſhips proclaim my ſon's intent.

Ver. 441. *The rev'rend Priam roſe.*] Priam rejects the wholeſome advice of Antenor, and complies with his ſon. This is indeed extremely natural to the indulgent character and eaſy nature of the old king, of which the whole Trojan war is a proof. Something like this weak fondneſs of a father is deſcribed in the Scripture, in the ſtory of David and Abſalom.

Next

Next let a truce be aſk'd, that Troy may burn
Her ſlaughter'd heroes, and their bones in-urn;
That done, once more the fate of war be try'd,
And whoſe the conqueſt, mighty Jove decide!
The monarch ſpoke: the warriors ſnatch'd with haſte
(Each at his poſt in arms) a ſhort repaſt.
Soon as the roſy morn had wak'd the day,
To the black ſhips Idæus bent his way;
There, to the ſons of Mars, in council found,
He rais'd his voice: the hoſt ſtood liſt'ning round.
Ye ſons of Atreus, and ye Greeks, give ear.
The words of Troy, and Troy's great monarch hear.
Pleas'd may ye hear (ſo heav'n ſucceed my pray'rs)
What Paris, author of the war, declares.

Ver. 450. *Next let a truce be aſk'd.*] The conduct of Homer in this place is remarkable: he makes Priam propoſe in council to ſend to the Greeks to aſk a truce to bury the dead. This the Greeks themſelves had before determined to propoſe: but it being more honourable to his country, the poet makes the Trojan herald prevent any propoſition that could be made by the Greeks. Thus they are requeſted to do what they themſelves were about to requeſt, and have the honour to comply with a propoſal which they themſelves would otherwiſe have taken as a favour.

Ver. 455. *Each at his poſt in arms.*] We have here the manner of the Trojans taking their repaſt: not promiſcuouſly, but each at his poſt. Homer was ſenſible, that military men ought not to remit their guard, even while they refreſh themſelves, but in every action diſplay the ſoldier. Euſtathius.

Ver. 460. *The ſpeech of Idæus.*] The propoſition of reſtoring the treaſures, and not Helen, is ſent as from Paris only; in which his father ſeems to permit him to treat by himſelf as a ſovereign prince, and the ſole author of the war. But the herald ſeems to exceed his commiſſion in what he tells the Greeks. Paris only offered to reſtore the treaſures he took from Greece, not including thoſe he brought from Sidon and other coaſts, where he touched in his voyage; but Idæus here proffers all that he had brought to Troy. He adds, as from himſelf, a wiſh that Paris had periſhed in that voyage.

The ſpoils and treaſures he to Ilion bore,
(Oh had he periſh'd ere they touch'd our ſhore)
He proffers injur'd Greece; with large increaſe
Of added Trojan wealth to buy the peace.
But to reſtore the beauteous bride again,
This Greece demands, and Troy requeſts in vain.
Next, O ye chiefs! we aſk a truce to burn
Our ſlaughter'd heroes, and their bones in-urn.
That done, once more the fate of war be try'd,
And whoſe the conqueſt, mighty Jove decide!

The Greeks gave ear, but none the ſilence broke;
At length Tydides roſe, and riſing ſpoke.
Oh take not, friends! defrauded of your fame,
Their proffer'd wealth, nor ev'n the Spartan dame:
Let conqueſt make them ours: fate ſhakes their wall,
And Troy already totters to her fall.

Th' admiring chiefs, and all the Grecian name,
With gen'ral ſhouts return'd him loud acclaim.
Then thus the king of kings rejects the peace:
Herald! in him thou hearſt the voice of Greece.
For what remains; let fun'ral flames be fed
With heroes corps: I war not with the dead:
Go ſearch your ſlaughter'd chiefs on yonder plain,
And gratify the Manes of the ſlain.

Ver. 474. *The Greeks gave ear, but none the ſilence broke.*] This ſilence of the Greeks might naturally proceed from an opinion, that however deſirous they were to put an end to this long war, Menelaus would never conſent to relinquiſh Helen, which was the thing inſiſted upon by Paris.

Ver. 476. *Oh take not, Greeks,* &c.] There is a peculiar decorum in making Diomed the author of this advice, to reject even Helen if ſhe were offered; this had not agreed with an amorous huſband like Menelaus, nor with a cunning politician like Ulyſſes, nor with a wiſe old man like Neſtor. But it is proper to Diomed, not only as a young fearleſs warrior, but as he is in particular an enemy to the intereſts of Venus.

Be

Be witneſs, Jove, whoſe thunder rolls on high:
He ſaid, and rear'd his ſceptre to the ſky.
To ſacred Troy, where all her princes lay
To wait th' event, the herald bent his way.
He came, and ſtanding in the midſt, explain'd
The peace rejected, but the truce obtain'd.
Strait to their ſev'ral cares the Trojans move,
Some ſearch the plains, ſome fell the ſounding grove:
Nor leſs the Greeks, deſcending on the ſhore,
Hew'd the green foreſts, and the bodies bore.
And now from forth the chambers of the main,
To ſhed his ſacred light on earth again,
Aroſe the golden chariot of the day,
And tipt the mountains with a purple ray.
In mingled throngs the Greek and Trojan train
Thro' heaps of carnage ſearch'd the mournful plain.
Scarce could the friend his ſlaughter'd friend explore,
With duſt diſhonour'd, and deform'd with gore.
The wounds they waſh'd, their pious tears they ſhed,
And, laid along their cars, deplor'd the dead.
Sage Priam check'd their grief: with ſilent haſte
The bodies decent on the piles were place'd:
With melting hearts the cold remains they burn'd;
And ſadly flow, to ſacred Troy return'd.
Nor leſs the Greeks their pious ſorrows ſhed,
And decent on the pile diſpoſe the dead;
The cold remains conſume with equal care;
And ſlowly, ſadly, to their fleet repair.
Now, ere the morn had ſtreak'd with red'ning light
The doubtful confines of the day and night;
About the dying flames the Greeks appear'd,
And round the pile a gen'ral tomb they rear'd.
Then, to ſecure the camp and naval pow'rs,
They rais'd embattel'd walls with lofty tow'rs:
From ſpace to ſpace were ample gates around,
For paſſing chariots; and a trench profound,

Of

Of large extent; and deep in earth below
Strong piles infix'd ſtood adverſe to the foe.
So toil'd the Greeks: Meanwhile the Gods above
In ſhining circle round their father Jove,
Amaz'd beheld the wond'rous works of man:
Then he, whoſe trident ſhakes the earth, began.
What mortals henceforth ſhall our power adore,
Our fanes frequent, our oracles implore,
If the proud Grecians thus ſucceſsful boaſt
Their riſing bulwarks on the ſea-beat coaſt?
See the long walls extending to the main,
No God conſulted, and no victim ſlain!
Their fame ſhall fill the world's remoteſt ends;
Wide, as the morn her golden beam extends.
While old Laomedon's divine abodes,
Thoſe radiant ſtructures rais'd by lab'ring Gods,
Shall, raz'd and loſt, in long oblivion ſleep.
Thus ſpoke the hoary monarch of the deep.
Th' almighty thund'rer with a frown replies,
That clouds the world, and blackens half the ſkies.
Strong God of Ocean! thou, whoſe rage can make
The ſolid earth's eternal baſis ſhake!
What cauſe of fear from mortal works could move
The meaneſt ſubject of our realms above?
Where-e'er the ſun's refulgent rays are caſt,
Thy pow'r is honour'd, and thy fame ſhall laſt.
But yon proud work no future age ſhall view,
No trace remain where once the glory grew.
The ſapp'd foundations by thy force ſhall fall,
And whelm'd beneath thy waves, drop the huge wall:
Vaſt drifts of ſand ſhall change the former ſhore;
The ruin vaniſh'd, and the name no more.
Thus they in heav'n: while, o'er the Grecian train,
The rolling ſun deſcending to the main
Beheld the finiſh'd work. Their bulls they ſlew:
Black from the tents the ſav'ry vapours flew,

And

And now the fleet, arriv'd from Lemnos' ſtrands,
With Bacchus' bleſſings chear'd the gen'rous bands.
Of fragrant wines the rich Eunæus ſent
A thouſand meaſures to the royal tent.
(Eunæus, whom Hypſipyle of yore
To Jaſon, ſhepherd of his people, bore.)
The reſt they purchas'd at their proper coſt,
And well the plenteous freight ſupply'd the hoſt:
Each, in exchange, proportion'd treaſures gave:
Some braſs, or iron, ſome an ox, or ſlave.
All night they feaſt, the Greek and Trojan pow'rs;
Thoſe on the fields, and theſe within their tow'rs.
But Jove averſe the ſigns of wrath diſplay'd,
And ſhot red light'nings thro' the gloomy ſhade:
Humbled they ſtood; pale horror ſeiz'd on all,
While the deep thunder ſhook th' aerial hall.
Each pour'd to Jove before the bowl was crown'd,
And large libations drench'd the thirſty ground:
Then late refreſh'd with ſleep from toils of fight,
Enjoy'd the balmy bleſſings of the night.

Ver. 526. *Meanwhile the Gods.*] The fiction of this wall raiſed by the Greeks, has given no little advantage to Homer's poem, in furniſhing him with an opportunity of changing the ſcene, and in a great degree the ſubject and accidents of his battles; ſo that the following deſcriptions of war are totally different from all the foregoing.

Ver. 560. *And now the fleet,* &c.] The verſes from hence to the end of the book, afford us the knowledge of ſome points of hiſtory and antiquity. As that Jaſon had a ſon by Hypſipyle, who ſucceeded his mother in the kingdom of Lemnos: that the iſle of Lemnos was anciently famous for its wines, and drove a traffic in them; and that coined money was not in uſe in the time of the Trojan war, but the trade of countries carried on by exchange in groſs, braſs, oxen, ſlaves, &c.

Ver. 572. *But Jove averſe,* &c.] The ſigns by which Jupiter here ſhews his wrath againſt the Grecians, are a prelude to thoſe more open declarations of his anger which follow in the next book, and prepare the mind of the reader for that machine, which might otherwiſe ſeem too bold and violent.

THE

THE ILIAD.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The second battle, and the diſtreſs of the Greeks.

JUPITER aſſembles a council of the deities, and threatens them with the pains of Tartarus, if they aſſiſt either ſide; Minerva only obtains of him, that ſhe may direct the Greeks by her counſels. The armies join battle; Jupiter on mount Ida weighs in his balances the fates of both, and affrights the Greeks with his thunders and lightenings. Neſtor alone continues in the field in great danger; Diomed relieves him; whoſe exploits, and thoſe of Hector, are excellently deſcribed. Juno endeavours to animate Neptune to the aſſiſtance of the Greeks, but in vain. The acts of Teucer, who is at length wounded by Hector, and carried off. Juno and Minerva prepare to aid the Grecians, but are reſtrained by Iris, ſent from Jupiter. The night puts an end to the battle. Hector continues in the field (the Greeks being driven to their fortification before the ſhips) and gives orders to keep the watch all night in the camp, to prevent the enemy from re-imbarking and eſcaping by flight. They kindle fires through all the field, and paſs the night under arms.

The time of ſeven and twenty days is employed from the opening of the poem to the end of this book. The ſcene here (except of the celeſtial machines) lies in the field toward the ſea-ſhore.

AURO-

AURORA now, fair daughter of the dawn,
Sprinkled with roſy light the dewy lawn;
When Jove conven'd the ſenate of the ſkies,
Where high Olympus' cloudy tops ariſe.
The ſire of Gods his awful ſilence broke;
The heav'ns attentive trembled as he ſpoke.
Celeſtial ſtates, immortal Gods! give ear,
Hear our decree, and rev'rence what ye hear;
The fix'd decree which not all heav'n can move;
Thou fate! fulfil it; and, ye powers! approve!
What God but enters yon forbidden field,
Who yields aſſiſtance, or but wills to yield;
Back to the ſkies with ſhame he ſhall be driv'n,
Gaſh'd with diſhoneſt wounds, the ſcorn of heav'n:
Or far, oh far, from ſteep Olympus thrown,
Low in the dark Tartarean gulf ſhall groan;

Homer, like moſt of the Greeks, is thought to have travelled into Ægypt, and brought from the prieſts there, not only their learning, but their manner of conveying it in fables and hieroglyphics. This is neceſſary to be conſidered by thoſe who would thoroughly penetrate into the beauty and deſign of many parts of this author: for whoever reflects that this was the mode of learning in thoſe times, will make no doubt but there are ſeveral myſteries both of moral and natural philoſophy involved in his fictions, which otherwiſe in the literal meaning appear too trivial or irrational; and it is but juſt, when theſe are not plain or immediately intelligible, to imagine that ſomething of this kind may be hid under them.

Ver. 16. *Low in the dark Tartarean gulf*, &c.] This opinion of Tartarus, the place of torture for the impious after death, might be taken from the Ægyptians; for it ſeems not improbable, as ſome writers have obſerved, that ſome tradition might then be ſpread in the eaſtern parts of the world, of the fall of the angels, the puniſhment of the damned, and other ſacred truths which were afterwards more fully explained, and taught by the prophets and apoſtles. Theſe Homer ſeems to allude to in this and other paſſages; as where Vulcan is ſaid to be precipitated from heaven in the firſt book; where Jupiter threatens Mars with Tartarus in the fifth; and where the dæmon of Diſcord is caſt out of heaven in the xiiith.

With burning chains fix'd to the brazen floors,
And lock'd by hell's inexorable doors;
As deep beneath th' infernal centre hurl'd,
As from that centre to th' æthereal world.
Let him who tempts me dread thoſe dire abodes;
And know, th' Almighty is the God of Gods.
League all your forces then, ye pow'rs above,
Join all, and try th' omnipotence of Jove:
Let down our golden, everlaſting chain,
Whoſe ſtrong embrace holds heav'n, and earth, and main:
Strive all, of mortal and immortal birth,
To drag, by this, the thund'rer down to earth:
Ye ſtrive in vain! if I but ſtretch this hand,
I heave the Gods, the Ocean, and the land;
I fix the chain to great Olympus' height,
And the vaſt world hangs trembling in my ſight!
For ſuch I reign, unbounded and above;
And ſuch are men, and Gods, compar'd to Jove.

Th' Almighty ſpoke, nor durſt the pow'rs reply,
A rev'rend horror ſilence'd all the ſky;
Trembling they ſtood before their ſov'reign's look;
At length his beſt-belov'd, the pow'r of Wiſdom, ſpoke.

Oh firſt and greateſt! God, by Gods ador'd!
We own thy might, our Father, and our Lord!
But ah! permit to pity human ſtate:
If not to help, at leaſt lament their fate.
From fields forbidden we ſubmiſs refrain,
With arms unaiding mourn our Argives ſlain;
Yet grant my counſels ſtill their breaſts may move,
Or all muſt periſh in the wrath of Jove.

Ver. 35. *Th' Almighty ſpoke.*] Homer in this whole paſſage plainly ſhows his belief of one ſupreme, omnipotent God, whom he introduces with a majeſty and ſuperiority worthy the great ruler of the univerſe. Accordingly Juſtin Martyr cites it as a proof of our author's attributing the power and government of all things to one firſt God, whoſe divinity is ſo far ſuperior to all other deities, that if compared to him, they may be ranked among mortals.

The

The cloud-compelling God her ſuit approv'd,
And ſmil'd ſuperior on his beſt-belov'd.
Then call'd his courſers, and his chariot took;
The ſtedfaſt firmament beneath them ſhook:
Rapt by th' æthereal ſteeds the chariot roll'd;
Braſs were their hoofs, their curling manes of gold.
Of heav'n's undroſſy gold the God's array
Refulgent, flaſh'd intolerable day.
High on the throne he ſhines: his courſers fly
Between th' extended earth and ſtarry ſky.
But when to Ida's topmoſt height he came,
(Fair nurſe of fountains, and of ſavage game)
Where o'er her pointed ſummits proudly rais'd,
His fane breath'd odours, and his altar blaz'd:
There, from his radiant car, the ſacred fire
Of Gods and men releas'd the ſteeds of fire:
Blue ambient miſts th' immortal ſteeds embrace'd;
High on the cloudy point his ſeat he place'd;
Thence his broad eye the ſubject world ſurveys,
The town, and tents, and navigable ſeas.
Now had the Grecians ſnatch'd a ſhort repaſt,
And buckled on their ſhining arms with haſte.
Troy rouz'd as ſoon; for on this dreadful day
The fate of fathers, wives, and infants, lay.
The gates unfolding pour forth all their train;
Squadrons on ſquadrons cloud the duſky plain:
Men, ſteeds, and chariots, ſhake the trembling ground;
The tumult thickens, and the ſkies reſound.
And now with ſhouts the ſhocking armies clos'd,
To lances lances, ſhields to ſhields oppos'd,
Hoſt againſt hoſt with ſhadowy legions drew,
The ſounding darts in iron tempeſts flew,
Victors and vanquiſh'd join promiſcuous cries,
Triumphant ſhouts and dying groans ariſe;
With ſtreaming blood the ſlipp'ry fields are dy'd,
And ſlaughter'd heroes ſwell the dreadful tide.

Long as the morning beams increaſing bright,
O'er heav'n's clear azure ſpread the ſacred light;
Commutual death the fate of war confounds,
Each adverſe battle gor'd with equal wounds.
But when the Sun the height of heav'n aſcends;
The Sire of Gods his golden ſcales ſuſpends,
With equal hand: in theſe explor'd the fate
Of Greece and Troy, and pois'd the mighty weight.
Preſs'd with its load, the Grecian balance lies
Low ſunk on earth, the Trojan ſtrikes the ſkies.
Then Jove from Ida's top his horrors ſpreads;
The clouds burſt dreadful o'er the Grecian heads;
Thick light'ning flaſh; the mutt'ring thunder rolls;
Their ſtrength he withers, and unmans their ſouls.

Before

Ver. 88. *The ſire of gods his golden ſcales ſuſpends.*] This figure, repreſenting God as weighing the deſtinies of men in his balances, was firſt made uſe of in holy writ. In the book of Job, which is acknowledged to be one of the moſt ancient of the ſcriptures, he prays to be *weighed in an even balance, that God may know his integrity.* Daniel declares from God to Belſhazzar, *Thou art weighed in the balances, and found light.* And Proverbs, ch. xvi. ver. 11. *A juſt weight and balance are the Lord's.*

Ver. 93. *Then Jove from Ida's top,* etc.] This diſtreſs of the Greeks being ſuppoſed, Jupiter's preſence was abſolutely neceſſary to bring them into it: for the inferior gods that were friendly to Greece were rather more in number and ſuperior in force to thoſe that favoured Troy; and the poet had ſhewed before, when both armies were left to themſelves, that the Greeks could overcome the Trojans; beſides it would have been an indelible reflection upon his countrymen to have been vanquiſhed by a ſmaller number. Therefore nothing leſs than the immediate interpoſition of Jupiter was requiſite, which ſhews the wonderful addreſs of the poet in his machinery.

Ver. 95. *Thick lightnings flaſh.*] This notion of Jupiter's declaring againſt the Greeks by thunder and lightning, is drawn (ſays Dacier) from truth itſelf: 1 Sam, ch. 7. *And as Samuel was offering up the burnt-offering, the Philiſtines drew near to battle againſt Iſrael: but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon*

the

Before his wrath the trembling hoſts retire;
The God in terrors, and the ſkies on fire.
Nor great Idomeneus that ſight could bear,
Nor each ſtern Ajax, thunderbolts of war:
Nor he, the king of men, th' alarm ſuſtain'd;
Neſtor alone amidſt the ſtorm remain'd.
Unwilling he remain'd, for Paris' dart
Had pierce'd his courſer in a mortal part;
Fix'd in the forehead where the ſpringing mane
Curl'd o'er the brow, it ſtung him to the brain:
Mad with his anguiſh, he begins to rear,
Paw with his hoofs aloft, and laſh the air.
Scarce had his faulchion cut the reins, and freed
Th' incumber'd chariot from the dying ſteed,
When dreadful Hector, thund'ring thro' the war,
Pour'd to the tumult on his whirling car.
That day had ſtretch'd beneath his matchleſs hand
The hoary monarch of the Pylian band,
But Diomed beheld; from forth the croud
He ruſh'd, and on Ulyſſes call'd aloud.

the Philiſtines, and diſcomfited them, and they were ſmitten before Iſrael. To which may be added, that in the xviiith Pſalm; *The Lord thundered in the heavens, and the Higheſt gave his voice; hailſtones and coals of fire. Yea, he ſent out his arrows, and ſcattered them; he ſhot out lightnings and diſcomfited them.*

Ver 115. *But Diomed beheld.*] The whole following ſtory of Neſtor and Diomed is admirably contrived to raiſe the character of the latter. He maintains his intrepidity, and ventures ſingly to bring off the old hero, notwithſtanding the general conſternation. The art of Homer will appear wonderful to any one who conſiders all the circumſtances of this part, and by what degrees he reconciles his flight of Diomed to that undaunted character. The thunderbolt falls juſt before him; that is not enough; Neſtor adviſes him to ſubmit to heaven; this does not prevail, he cannot bear the thoughts of flight: Neſtor drives back the chariot without his conſent; he is again inclined to go on until Jupiter again declares againſt him.

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V

HOMER's ILIAD.

Whither, oh whither does Ulysses run?
Oh fight unworthy great Laertes' son!
Mad with the vulgar shall thy fate be found,
Pierce'd in the back, a vile, dishonest wound?
Oh turn and save from Hector's direful rage
The glory of the Greeks, the Pylian sage.
His fruitless words are lost unheard in air,
Ulysses seeks the ships, and shelters there.
But bold Tydides to the rescue goes,
A single warrior 'midst a host of foes;
Before the coursers with a sudden spring
He leap'd, and anxious thus bespoke the king.
Great perils, father! wait th' unequal fight;
These younger champions will oppress thy might.
Thy veins no more with ancient vigour glow,
Weak is thy servant, and thy coursers slow.
Then haste, ascend my seat, and from the car
Observe the steeds of Tros, renown'd in war,
Practis'd alike to turn, to stop, to chace,
To dare the fight, or urge the rapid race:
These late obey'd Æneas' guiding rein;
Leave thou thy chariot to our faithful train:
With these against yon Trojans will we go,
Nor shall great Hector want an equal foe;
Fierce as he is, ev'n he may learn to fear
The thirsty fury of my flying spear.
Thus said the chief; and Nestor, skill'd in war,
Approves his counsel, and ascends the car;

Ver. 121. *Oh turn and save, &c.*] There is a decorum in making Diomed call Ulysses to the assistance of his brother sage? for who better know the importance of Nestor than Ulysses? But the question is, whether Ulysses did not drop Nestor, as one great minister would do another, and fancied he should be the wise man when the other was gone? Eustathius indeed is of opinion that Homer meant not to cast any aspersion on Ulysses, nor would have given him so many noble appellations, when in the same breath he reflected upon his courage.

The

The ſteeds he left, their truſty ſervants hold;
Eurymedon, and Sthenelus the bold.
The rev'rend charioteer directs the courſe,
And ſtrains his aged arm to laſh the horſe.
Hector they face; unknowing how to fear,
Fierce he drove on; Tydides whirl'd his ſpear.
The ſpear with erring haſte miſtook its way,
But plunge'd in Eniopeus' boſom lay.
His opening hand in death forſakes the rein;
The ſteeds fly back: he falls, and ſpurns the plain.
Great Hector ſorrows for his ſervant kill'd,
Yet unrevenge'd permits to preſs the field;
Till to ſupply his place, and rule the car,
Roſe Archeptolemus, the fierce in war.
And now had death and horror cover'd all;
Like tim'rous flocks the Trojans in their wall
Inclos'd had bled: but Jove with awful ſound
Roll'd the big thunder o'er the vaſt profound:
Full in Tydides' face the lightning flew;
The ground before him flam'd with ſulphur blue:

The

Ver. 159. *And now had death*, &c.] Euſtathius obſerves how wonderfully Homer ſtill advances the character of Diomed: when all the leaders of Greece were retreated, the poet ſays, that had not Jupiter interpoſed, Diomed alone had driven the whole army of Troy to their walls, and with his ſingle hand have vanquiſhed an army.

Ver. 164. *The ground before him flam'd.*] Here is a battle deſcribed with ſo much fire, that the warmeſt imagination of an able painter cannot add a circumſtance to heighten the ſurprize or horror of the picture. Here is what they call the *Fracas*, or hurry and tumult of the action in the utmoſt ſtrength of colouring, upon the fore ground; and the repoſe or ſolemnity at a diſtance, with great propriety and judgement. Firſt, in the Eloignement, we behold Jupiter in golden armour, ſurrounded with glory, upon the ſummit of Mount Ida; his chariot and horſes by him, wrapt in dark clouds. In the next place below the horizon, appear the clouds rolling and opening, through which the lightning flaſhes in

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Whither, oh whither does Ulyſſes run?
Oh flight unworthy great Laertes' ſon!
Mix'd with the vulgar ſhall thy fate be found,
Pierce'd in the back, a vile, diſhoneſt wound?
Oh turn and ſave from Hector's direful rage
The glory of the Greeks, the Pylian ſage.
His fruitleſs words are loſt unheard in air,
Ulyſſes ſeeks the ſhips, and ſhelters there.
But bold Tydides to the reſcue goes,
A ſingle warrior 'midſt a hoſt of foes;
Before the courſers with a ſudden ſpring
He leap'd, and anxious thus beſpoke the king.
Great perils, father! wait th' unequal fight;
Theſe younger champions will oppreſs thy might.
Thy veins no more with ancient vigour glow,
Weak is thy ſervant, and thy courſers ſlow.
Then haſte, aſcend my ſeat, and from the car
Obſerve the ſteeds of Tros, renown'd in war,
Practis'd alike to turn, to ſtop, to chace,
To dare the fight, or urge the rapid race:
Theſe late obey'd Æneas' guiding rein;
Leave thou thy chariot to our faithful train:
With theſe againſt yon Trojans will we go,
Nor ſhall great Hector want an equal foe;
Fierce as he is, ev'n he may learn to fear
The thirſty fury of my flying ſpear.
Thus ſaid the chief; and Neſtor, ſkill'd in war,
Approves his counſel, and aſcends the car;

Ver. 121. *Oh turn and ſave*, &c.] There is a decorum in making Diomed call Ulyſſes to the aſſiſtance of his brother ſage? for who better know the importance of Neſtor than Ulyſſes? But the queſtion is, whether Ulyſſes did not drop Neſtor, as one great miniſter would do another, and fancied he ſhould be the wiſe man when the other was gone? Euſtathius indeed is of opinion that Homer meant not to caſt any aſperſion on Ulyſſes, nor would have given him ſo many noble appellations, when in the ſame breath he *reflected* upon his courage.

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the

The quiv'ring ſteeds fell proſtrate at the ſight;
And Neſtor's trembling hand confeſs'd his fright;
He drop'd the reins; and ſhook with ſacred dread,
Thus, turning, warn'd th' intrepid Diomed.
O chief! too daring in thy friend's defence,
Retire adviſ'd, and urge the chariot hence.
This day, averſe, the ſov'reign of the ſkies
Aſſiſts great Hector, and our palm denies.
Some other ſun may ſee the happier hour,
When Greece ſhall conquer by his heav'nly pow'r.
'Tis not in man his fix'd decree to move:
The great will glory to ſubmit to Jöve.
O rev'rend prince! (Tydides thus replies)
Thy years are awful, and thy words are wiſe.
But ah, what grief! ſhould haughty Hector boaſt,
I fled inglorious to the guarded coaſt.
Before that dire diſgrace ſhall blaſt my fame,
O'erwhelm me, earth; and hide a warrior's ſhame.
To whom Gerenian Neſtor thus reply'd:
Gods! can thy courage fear the Phrygian's pride?
Hector may vaunt, but who ſhall heed the boaſt?
Not thoſe who felt thy arm, the Dardan hoſt,
Nor Troy, yet bleeding in her heroes loſt;
Not ev'n a Phrygian dame, who dreads the ſword
That laid in duſt her lov'd, lamented lord.
He ſaid, and haſty, o'er the gaſping throng
Drives the ſwift ſteeds; the chariot ſmokes along.

the face of the Greeks, who are flying on all ſides; Agamemnon and the reſt of the commanders in the rear, in poſtures of aſtoniſhment. Towards the middle of the piece, we ſee Neſtor in the utmoſt diſtreſs, one of his horſes having a deadly wound in the forehead with a dart, which makes him rear and writhe, and diſorder the reſt. Neſtor is cutting the harneſs with his ſword, while Hector advances driving full ſpeed. Diomed interpoſes, in an action of the utmoſt fierceneſs and intrepidity: theſe two heroes make the principal figures and ſubject of the picture. A burning thunderbolt falls juſt before the feet of Diomed's horſes, from *whence a horrid flame of ſulphur riſes.*

The

The ſhouts of Trojans thicken in the wind;
The ſtorm of hiſſing jav'lins pours behind.
Then with a voice that ſhakes the ſolid ſkies,
Pleas'd Hector braves the warrior as he flies.
Go, mighty hero! grace'd above the reſt
In ſeats of council and the ſumptuous feaſt:
Now hope no more thoſe honours from thy train;
Go, leſs than woman, in the form of man!
To ſcale our walls, to wrap our tow'rs in flames,
To lead in exile the fair Phrygian dames,
Thy once proud hopes, preſumptuous prince! are fled;
This arm ſhall reach thy heart, and ſtretch thee dead.
Now fears diſſuade him, and now hopes invite,
To ſtop his courſers, and to ſtand the fight;
Thrice turn'd the chief, and thrice imperial Jove
On Ida's ſummits thunder'd from above.
Great Hector heard; he ſaw the flaſhing light,
(The ſign of conqueſt) and thus urge'd the fight.
Hear, ev'ry Trojan, Lycian, Dardan band,
All fam'd in war, and dreadful hand to hand.
Be mindful of the wreaths your arms have won,
Your great forefathers glories, and your own.
Heard ye the voice of Jove? ſucceſs and fame
Await on Troy, on Greece eternal ſhame.
In vain they ſkulk behind their boaſted wall,
Weak bulwarks! deſtin'd by this arm to fall.
High o'er their ſlighted trench our ſteeds ſhall bound,
And paſs victorious o'er the levell'd mound.
Soon as before yon hollow ſhips we ſtand,
Fight each with flames, and toſs the blazing brand;

Ver. 214. *Heard ye the voice of Jove?*] It was a noble and effectual manner of encouraging the troops, by telling them that God was ſurely on their ſide: this, it ſeems, has been an ancient practice, as it has been uſed in modern times by thoſe who never read Homer.

Till their proud navy wrapt in ſmoke and fires,
All Greece, encompaſs'd, in one blaze expires.
Furious he ſaid; then bending o'er the yoke,
Encourage'd his proud ſteeds, while thus he ſpoke.
Now Xanthus, Æthon, Lampus! urge the chace,
And thou, Podargus! prove thy gen'rous race:
Be fleet, be fearleſs, this important day,
And all your maſter's well ſpent care repay.
For this, high fed in plenteous ſtalls ye ſtand,
Serv'd with pure wheat, and by a princeſs' hand;
For this my ſpouſe of great Aetion's line
So oft has ſteep'd the ſtrength'ning grain in wine.
Now ſwift purſue, now thunder uncontroll'd;
Give me to ſeize rich Neſtor's ſhield of gold;
From Tydeus' ſhoulders ſtrip the coſtly load,
Vulcanian arms, the labour of a God:
Theſe if we gain, then victory, ye pow'rs!
This night, this glorious night, the fleet is ours.
That heard, deep anguiſh ſtung Saturnia's ſoul;
She ſhook her throne that ſhook the ſtarry pole:
And thus to Neptune: Thou, whoſe force can make
The ſtedfaſt earth from her foundations ſhake,
See'ſt thou the Greeks by fates unjuſt oppreſt,
Nor ſwells thy heart in that immortal breaſt?
Yet Ægæ, Helice, thy pow'r obey,
And gifts unceaſing on thine altars lay.
Would all the deities of Greece combine,
In vain the gloomy thund'rer might repine:

Ver. 237. *Vulcanian arms, the labour of a God.*] Theſe were the arms that Diomed had received from Glaucus, and a prize worthy Hector, being (as we are told in the ſixth book) intirely of gold. I do not remember any other place where the ſhield of Neſtor is celebrated by Homer.

Ver. 246. *Yet Ægæ, Helice.*] Theſe were two cities of Greece in which Neptune was particularly honoured, and in each of which there was a temple and a ſtatue of him.

Sole

Sole ſhould he ſit, with ſcarce a God to friend,
And ſee his Trojans to the ſhades deſcend:
Such be the ſcene from his Idæan bow'r;
Ungrateful proſpect to the ſullen pow'r!
Neptune with wrath rejects the raſh deſign:
What rage, what madneſs, furious queen, is thine?
I war not with the higheſt. All above
Submit and tremble at the hand of Jove.
Now Godlike Hector, to whoſe matchleſs might
Jove gave the glory of the deſtin'd fight,
Squadrons on ſquadrons drives, and fills the fields
With cloſe-rang'd chariots, and with thicken'd ſhields.
Where the deep trench in length extended lay,
Compacted troops ſtand wedg'd in firm array,
A dreadful front! they ſhake the bands, and threat
With long-deſtroying flames the hoſtile fleet.
The king of men, by Juno's ſelf inſpir'd,
Toil'd thro' the tents, and all his army fir'd.
Swift as he mov'd, he lifted in his hand
His purple robe, bright enſign of command.
High on the midmoſt bark the king appear'd;
There, from Ulyſſes' deck, his voice was heard.

To

Ver. 262. *Where the deep trench.*] That is to ſay, the ſpace betwixt the ditch and the wall was filled with the men and chariots of the Greeks; Hector not having yet paſt the ditch.

Ver. 269. *His purple robe.*] Agamemnon here addreſſes himſelf to the eyes of the army: his voice might have been loſt in the confuſion of a retreat, but the motion of this purple robe could not fail of attracting the regards of the ſoldiers. His ſpeech alſo is very remarkable; he firſt endeavours to ſhame them into courage, and then begs of Jupiter to give that courage ſucceſs; at leaſt ſo far as not to ſuffer the whole army to be deſtroyed.

Ver. 270. *High on the midmoſt bark, &c.*] We learn from hence the ſituation of the ſhips of Ulyſſes, Achilles, and Ajax. The two latter being the ſtrongeſt heroes of the army, were placed to defend either end of the fleet, as moſt obnoxious to the incurſions

of

To Ajax and Achilles reach'd the ſound,
Whoſe diſtant ſhips the guarded navy bound.
Oh Argives! ſhame of human race; he cry'd,
(The hollow veſſels to his voice reply'd)
Where now are all your glorious boaſts of yore,
Your haſty triumphs on the Lemnian ſhore?
Each fearleſs hero dares an hundred foes,
While the feaſt laſts, and while the goblet flows;
But who to meet one martial man is found,
When the fight rages, and the flames ſurround?
O mighty Jove! oh ſire of the diſtreſs'd!
Was ever king like me, like me oppreſs'd?
With pow'r immenſe, with juſtice arm'd in vain;
My glory raviſh'd, and my people ſlain!
To thee my vows were breath'd from ev'ry ſhore;
What altar ſmok'd not with our victims gore?
With fat of bulls I fed the conſtant flame,
And aſk'd deſtruction to the Trojan name.
Now, gracious God! far humbler our demand;
Give theſe at leaſt to 'ſcape from Hector's hand,
And ſave the relicts of the Grecian land!
Thus pray'd the king, and heav'n's great Father heard
His vows, in bitterneſs of ſoul preferr'd;
The wrath appeas'd, by happy ſigns declares,
And gives the people to their monarch's pray'rs.

or ſurpriſes of the enemy; and Ulyſſes, being the ableſt head, was allotted the middle place, as more ſafe and convenient for the council, and that he might be the nearer, if any emergency required his advice.

Ver. 293. *Thus pray'd the king, and heav'n's great father heard.*] It is to be obſerv'd in general, that Homer hardly ever makes his heroes ſucceed, unleſs they have firſt offered a prayer to heaven. Whether they engage in war, go upon an embaſſy, undertake a voyage; in a word, whatever they enterprize, they almoſt always ſupplicate ſome God; and whenever we find this omitted, we may expect ſome adverſity to befal them in the courſe of the ſtory.

His

His eagle, ſacred bird of heav'n! he ſent,
A fawn his talons truſs'd (divine portent!)
High o'er the wond'ring hoſts he ſoar'd above,
Who paid their vows to Panomphæan Jove;
Then let the prey before his altar fall;
The Greeks beheld, and tranſport ſeiz'd on all:
Encourage'd by the ſign, the troops revive,
And fierce on Troy, with doubled fury drive.
Tydides firſt, of all the Grecian force,
O'er the broad ditch impell'd his foaming horſe,
Pierce'd the deep ranks, their ſtrongeſt battle tore,
And dy'd his jav'lin red with Trojan gore.
Young Agelous (Phradmon was his ſire)
With flying courſers ſhunn'd his dreadful ire:
Struck thro' the back, the Phrygian fell oppreſt;
The dart drove on, and iſſued at his breaſt:
Headlong he quits the car; his arms reſound:
His pond'rous buckler thunders on the ground.
Forth ruſh a tide of Greeks, the paſſage freed;
Th' Atridæ firſt, th' Ajaces next ſucceed:
Meriones, like Mars, in arms renown'd,
And Godlike Idomen, now paſs'd the mound;
Evæmon's ſon next iſſues to the foe,
And laſt, young Teucer with his bended bow.

Ver. 277. *The eagle, ſacred bird!*] Jupiter, upon the prayers of Agamemnon, ſends an omen to encourage the Greeks. The application of it is obvious: the eagle ſignified Hector, the fawn denoted the fear and flight of the Greeks, and being dropt at the altar of Jupiter, ſhewed that they would be ſaved by the protection of that God.

Ver. 305. *Tydides firſt*] Diomed, as we have before ſeen, was the laſt that retreated from the thunder of Jupiter; he is now the firſt that returns to the battle. It is worth while to obſerve the behaviour of the hero upon this occaſion: he retreats with the utmoſt reluctancy, and advances with the utmoſt ardour; he flies with greater impatience to meet danger, than he could before to put himſelf in ſafety. Euſtath.

Secure behind the Telamonian ſhield
The ſkilful archer wide ſurvey'd the field,
With ev'ry ſhaft ſome hoſtile victim flew,
Then cloſe beneath the ſevenfold orb withdrew:
The conſcious infant ſo, when fear alarms,
Retires for ſafety to the mother's arms.
Thus Ajax guards his brother in the field,
Moves as he moves, and turns the ſhining ſhield.
Who firſt by Teucer's mortal arrows bled?
Orſilochus; then fell Ormenus dead:
The Godlike Lycophon next preſs'd the plain,
With Chromius, Dætor, Opheleſtes ſlain:
Bold Hamopaon breathleſs ſunk to ground;
The bloody pile great Melanippus crown'd.
Heaps fell on heaps, ſad trophies of his art,
A Trojan ghoſt attending ev'ry dart.
Great Agamemnon views with joyful eye
The ranks grow thinner as his arrows fly:
Oh youth for ever dear! (the monarch cry'd)
Thus, always thus, thy early worth be try'd;
Thy brave example ſhall retrieve our hoſt,
Thy country's ſaviour, and thy father's boaſt!

Ver. 321. *Secure behind the Telamonian ſhield.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that Teucer being an excellent archer, and uſing only the bow, could not wear any arms which would incumber him, and render him leſs expedite in his archery. Homer, to ſecure him from the enemy, repreſents him as ſtanding behind Ajax's ſhield, and ſhooting from thence. Thus the poet gives us a new circumſtance of a battle, and though Ajax atchieves nothing himſelf, he maintains a ſuperiority over Teucer: Ajax may be ſaid to kill theſe Trojans with the arrows of Teucer.

Ver. 337. *Great Agamemnon views.*] Euſtathius obſerves, that Homer would here teach the duty of a general in a battle. He muſt obſerve the behaviour of his ſoldiers: he muſt honour the hero, reproach the coward, reduce the diſorderly; and for the encouragement of the deſerving, he muſt promiſe rewards, that deſert *in arms* may not be paid with glory only.

Sprung

Sprung from an alien's bed thy ſire to grace,
The vig'rous offspring of a ſtol'n embrace.
Proud of his boy, he own'd the gen'rous flame,
And the brave ſon repays his cares with fame.
Now hear a monarch's vow: If heav'n's high pow'rs
Give me to raze Troy's long-defended tow'rs;
Whatever treaſures Greece for me deſign,
The next rich honorary gift be thine:
Some golden tripod, or diſtinguiſh'd car,
With courſers dreadful in the ranks of war,
Or ſome fair captive whom thy eyes approve,
Shall recompenſe the warrior's toils with love.
To this the chief: With praiſe the reſt inſpire,
Nor urge a ſoul already fill'd with fire.
What ſtrength I have, be now in battle try'd,
Till ev'ry ſhaft in Phrygian blood be dy'd.
Since rallying from our wall we force'd the foe,
Still aim'd at Hector have I bent my bow:
Eight forky arrows from this hand have fled,
And eight bold heroes by their points lie dead:
But ſure ſome God denies me to deſtroy
This fury of the field, this dog of Troy.
He ſaid, and twang'd the ſtring. The weapon flies
At Hector's breaſt, and ſings along the ſkies:
He miſs'd the mark; but pierce'd Gorgythio's heart,
And drench'd in royal blood the thirſty dart.
(Fair Caſtianira, nymph of form divine,
This offspring added to king Priam's line.)
As full-blown poppies overcharge'd with rain
Decline the head, and drooping kiſs the plain;

So

Ver. 364. *This dog of Troy.*] This is literal from the Greek, and I have ventured it, as no improper expreſſion of the rage of Teucer for having been ſo often diſappointed in his aim, and of his paſſion againſt that enemy who had ſo long prevented all the hopes of the Grecians.

Ver. 371. *As full-blown poppies.*] This ſimile is very beauti-

So ſinks the youth: his beauteous head, depreſt
Beneath his helmet, drops upon his breaſt.
Another ſhaft the raging archer drew:
That other ſhaft with erring fury flew,
(From Hector Phœbus turn'd the flying wound)
Yet fell not dry or guiltleſs to the ground:
Thy breaſt, brave Archeptolemus! it tore,
And dipp'd its feathers in no vulgar gore.
Headlong he falls: his ſudden fall alarms
The ſteeds that ſtartle at his ſounding arms.
Hector with grief his charioteer beheld,
All pale and breathleſs on the ſanguine field.
Then bids Cebriones direct the rein,
Quits his bright car, and iſſues on the plain.
Dreadful he ſhouts: from earth a ſtone he took,
And ruſh'd on Teucer with the lifted rock.
The youth already ſtrain'd the forceful yew;
The ſhaft already to his ſhoulder drew;
The feather in his hand, juſt wing'd for flight,
Touch'd where the neck and hollow cheſt unite;
There, where the juncture knits the channel bone,
The furious chief diſcharge'd the craggy ſtone:
The bow-ſtring burſt beneath the pond'rous blow,
And his numb'd hand diſmiſs'd his uſeleſs bow.
He fell: but Ajax his broad ſhield diſplay'd,
And ſcreen'd his brother with a mighty ſhade;
Till great Alaſtor, and Meciſtheus, bore
The batter'd archer groaning to the ſhore.

Troy yet found grace before th' Olympian ſire,
He arm'd their hands, and fill'd their breaſts with fire.
The Greeks, repuls'd, retreat behind their wall,
Or in the trench on heaps confus'dly fall.

ful, and exactly repreſents the manner of Gorgythion's death: there is ſuch a ſweetneſs in the compariſon, that it makes us pity the youth's fall, and almoſt feel his wound.

Firſt of the foe great Hector march'd along,
With terror cloth'd, and more than mortal ſtrong.
As the bold hound, that gives the lion chace,
With beating boſom, and with eager pace,
Hangs on his haunch, or faſtens on his heels,
Guards as he turns, and circles as he wheels:
Thus oft the Grecians turn'd, but ſtill they flew;
Thus following Hector ſtill the hindmoſt ſlew.
When flying they had paſs'd the trench profound,
And many a chief lay gaſping on the ground;
Before the ſhips a deſp'rate ſtand they made,
And fir'd the troops, and call'd the Gods to aid.
Fierce on his rattling chariot Hector came;
His eyes like Gorgon ſhot a ſanguine flame
That wither'd all their hoſt: like Mars he ſtood,
Dire as the monſter, dreadful as the God!
Their ſtrong diſtreſs the wife of Jove ſurvey'd;
Then penſive thus, to war's triumphant maid.

Oh daughter of that God, whoſe arm can wield
Th' avenging bolt, and ſhake the ſable ſhield!
Now, in this moment of her laſt deſpair,
Shall wretched Greece no more confeſs our care,
Condemn'd to ſuffer the full force of fate,
And drain the dregs of heav'n's relentleſs hate!
Gods! ſhall one raging hand thus level all!
What numbers fell? what numbers yet ſhall fall?
What pow'r divine ſhall Hector's wrath aſſuage?
Still ſwells the ſlaughter, and ſtill grows the rage!

Ver. 407. *As the bold hound that gives the lion chace.*] This ſimile is the juſteſt imaginable; and gives the moſt lively picture of the manner in which the Grecians fled, and Hector purſued them, ſtill ſlaughtering the hindmoſt. Gratius and Oppian have given us particular deſcriptions of thoſe ſort of dogs, of prodigious ſtrength and ſize, which were employed to hunt and tear down wild beaſts.

So ſpake th' imperial regent of the ſkies;
To whom the Goddeſs with the azure eyes:
Long ſince had Hector ſtain'd theſe fields with gore,
Stretch'd by ſome Argive on his native ſhore;
But he above, the Sire of heav'n, withſtands,
Mocks our attempts, and ſlights our juſt demands.
The ſtubborn God, inflexible and hard,
Forgets my ſervice and deſerv'd reward:
Sav'd I, for this, his fav'rite * ſon diſtreſs'd,
By ſtern Euriſtheus with long labours preſs'd?
He begg'd, with tears he begg'd, in deep diſmay;
I ſhot from heav'n, and gave his arm the day.
Oh had my wiſdom known this dire event,
When to grim Pluto's gloomy gates he went;
The triple dog had never felt his chain,
Nor Styx been croſs'd, nor hell explor'd in vain.
Averſe to me of all his heav'n of Gods,
At Thetis' ſuit the partial thund'rer nods.
To grace her gloomy, fierce, reſenting ſon,
My hopes are fruſtrate, and my Greeks undone.
Some future day, perhaps he may be mov'd
To call his blue-ey'd maid his beſt-belov'd.
Haſte, launch thy chariot, thro yon ranks to ride;
Myſelf will arm, and thunder at thy ſide.
Then Goddeſs! ſay, ſhall Hector glory then,
(That terror of the Greeks, that man of men)
When Juno's ſelf, and Pallas ſhall appear,
All dreadful in the crimſon walks of war?
What mighty Trojans then, on yonder ſhore,
Expiring, pale, and terrible no more,
Shall feaſt the fowls, and glut the dogs with gore?

She

* Hercules.

Ver. 461. *What mighty Trojan then, on yonder ſhore.*] She means Hector, whoſe death the poet makes her foreſee in ſuch a lively manner, as if the image of the hero lay bleeding before her. This

picture

She ceas'd, and Juno rein'd the fleeds with care;
(Heav'n's awful empreſs, Saturn's other heir)
Pallas, meanwhile, her various veil unbound,
With flow'rs adorn'd, with art immortal crown'd;
The radiant robe her ſacred fingers wove
Floats in rich waves, and ſpreads the court of Jove.
Her father's arms her mighty limbs inveſt,
His cuiraſs blazes on her ample breaſt.
The vig'rous pow'r the trembling car aſcends;
Shook by her arm, the maſſy jav'lin bends;
Huge, pond'rous, ſtrong! that when her fury burns,
Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hoſts o'erturns.
Saturnia lends the laſh; the courſers fly;
Smooth glides the chariot thro' the liquid ſky.
Heav'n gates ſpontaneous open to the pow'rs,
Heav'n's golden gates, kept by the winged Hours,
Commiſſion'd in alternate watch they ſtand,
The ſun's bright portals and the ſkies command;
Cloſe, or unfold, th' eternal gates of day,
Bar heav'n with clouds, or roll thoſe clouds away.
The ſounding hinges ring, the clouds divide;
Prone down the ſteep of heav'n their courſe they guide.
But Jove incens'd, from Ida's top ſurvey'd,
And thus injoin'd the many-colour'd maid.
Thaumantia! mount the winds, and ſtop their car;
Againſt the higheſt who ſhall wage the war?
If furious yet they dare the vain debate,
Thus have I ſpoke, and what I ſpeak is fate.

picture is noble, and agreeable to the obſervation we formerly made of Homer's method of propheſying in the ſpirit of poetry.

Ver. 477. *Smooth glides the chariot*, &c.] One would almoſt think Homer made his gods and goddeſſes deſcend from Olympus, only to mount again, and mount only to deſcend again, he is ſo remarkably delighted with the deſcription of their horſes, and their manner of flight. We have no leſs than three of theſe in the preſent book.

Their

Their courſers cruſh'd beneath the wheels ſhall lie,
Their car in fragments ſcatter'd o'er the ſky;
My lightning theſe rebellious ſhall confound,
And hurl them flaming, headlong to the ground,
Condemn'd for ten revolving years to weep
The wounds impreſs'd by burning thunder deep.
So ſhall Minerva learn to fear our ire,
Nor dare to combat her's and nature's fire.
For Juno, headſtrong and imperious ſtill,
She claims ſome title to tranſgreſs our will.
Swift as the wind, the various-colour'd maid
From Ida's top her golden wings diſplay'd;
To great Olympus' ſhining gates ſhe flies,
There meets the chariot ruſhing down the ſkies,
Reſtrains their progreſs from the bright abodes,
And ſpeaks the mandate of the Sire of Gods.
What frenzy, Goddeſſes! what rage can move
Celeſtial minds to tempt the wrath of Jove?
Deſiſt, obedient to his high command;
This is his word: and know his word ſhall ſtand.
His lightning your rebellion ſhall confound
And hurl ye headlong, flaming to the ground:
Your horſes cruſh'd beneath the wheels ſhall lie,
Your car in fragments ſcatter'd o'er the ſky;
Yourſelves condemn'd ten rolling years to weep
The wounds impreſs'd by burning thunder deep.
So ſhall Minerva learn to fear his ire,
Nor dare to combate her's and Nature's Sire.
For Juno, headſtrong and imperious ſtill,
She claims ſome title to tranſgreſs his will:
But thee what deſp'rate inſolence has driv'n,
To lift thy lance againſt the King of heav'n?

Then

Ver. 522. *But thee what deſp'rate inſolence*] It is obſervable, that Homer generally makes his meſſengers, divine as well as human, very punctual in delivering their meſſages in the very words of

Then mounting on the pinions of the wind,
She flew; and Juno thus her rage reſign'd.
O daughter of that God, whoſe arm can wield
Th' avenging bolt, and ſhake the dreadful ſhield!
No more let beings of ſuperior birth
Contend with Jove for this low race of earth:
Triumphant now, now miſerably ſlain,
They breathe or periſh as the fates ordain.
But Jove's high counſels full effect ſhall find,
And ever conſtant, ever rule mankind.
She ſpoke, and backward turn'd her ſteeds of light,
Adorn'd with manes of gold, and heav'nly bright.
The Hours unloos'd them, panting as they ſtood,
And heap'd their mangers with ambroſial food.
There ty'd, they reſt in high celeſtial ſtalls;
The chariot propt againſt the cryſtal walls.
The penſive Goddeſſes, abaſh'd, controul'd,
Mix with the Gods, and fill their ſeats of gold.
And now the Thund'rer meditates his flight
From Ida's ſummits to th' Olympian height.
Swifter than thought the wheels inſtinctive fly,
Flame thro' the vaſt of air, and reach the ſky.

of the perſons who commiſſioned them. Iris, however, in the cloſe of her ſpeech, has ventured to go beyond her inſtructions and all rules of decorum, by adding theſe expreſſions of bitter reproach to a goddeſs of ſuperior rank.

Ver. 525. *Juno her rage reſign'd.*] Homer never intended to give us the picture of a good wife in the deſcription of Juno: ſhe obeys Jupiter, but it is a forced obedience: ſhe ſubmits rather to the governor than to the huſband, and is more afraid of his lightning than his commands.

Ver. 531. *They breathe or periſh as the fates ordain.*] The tranſlator has turned this line in compliance to an old obſervation upon Homer, which Macrobius has written, and ſeveral others have ſince fallen into: they ſay he was ſo great a fataliſt, as not ſo much as to name the word *fortune* in all his works, but conſtantly *fate* inſtead of it.

Twas

'Twas Neptune's charge his courſers to unbrace,
And fix the car in its immortal baſe;
There ſtood the chariot, beaming forth its rays,
Till with a ſnowy veil he ſcreen'd the blaze.
He, whoſe all-conſcious eyes the world behold,
Th' eternal Thunderer, ſat thron'd in gold.
High heav'n the footſtool of his feet he makes,
And wide beneath him, all Olympus ſhakes.
Trembling afar th' offending pow'rs appear'd
Confus'd and ſilent, for his frown they fear'd.
He ſaw their ſoul, and thus his word imparts:
Pallas and Juno! ſay, why heave your hearts?
Soon was your battle o'er: proud Troy retir'd
Before your face, and in your wrath expir'd.
But know, whoe'er almighty power withſtand!
Unmatch'd our force, unconquer'd is our hand:
Who ſhall the ſov'reign of the ſkies controul?
Not all the Gods that crown the ſtarry pole.
Your hearts ſhall tremble, if our arms we take,
And each immortal nerve with horror ſhake.
For thus I ſpeak, and what I ſpeak ſhall ſtand;
What pow'r ſoe'er provokes our lifted hand,
On this our hill no more ſhall hold his place,
Cut off, and exil'd from th' æthereal race.
Juno and Pallas grieving hear the doom,
But feaſt their ſouls on Ilion's woes to come.
Tho' ſecret anger ſwell'd Minerva's breaſt,
The prudent Goddeſs yet her wrath repreſt:
But Juno, impotent of rage, replies.
What haſt thou ſaid, oh tyrant of the ſkies!
Strength and omnipotence inveſt thy throne;
'Tis thine to puniſh; ours to grieve alone.
For Greece we grieve, abandon'd by her fate,
To drink the dregs of thy unmeaſur'd hate:
From fields forbidden we ſubmiſs refrain,
With arms unaiding ſee our Argives ſlain;

Yet

Yet grant our counſels ſtill their breaſts may move,
Leſt all ſhould periſh in the rage of Jove.
The Goddeſs thus: and thus the God replies,
Who ſwells the clouds, and blackens all the ſkies.
The morning ſun, awak'd by loud alarms,
Shall ſee th' Almighty Thunderer in arms.
What heaps of Argives then ſhall load the plain,
Thoſe radiant eyes ſhall view, and view in vain.
Nor ſhall great Hector ceaſe the rage of fight,
The navy flaming, and thy Greeks in flight,
Ev'n till the day, when certain fates ordain
That ſtern Achilles (his Patroclus ſlain)
Shall riſe in vengeance, and lay waſte the plain.
For ſuch is fate, nor canſt thou turn its courſe
With all thy rage, with all thy rebel force.
Fly, if thou wilt, to earth's remoteſt bound,
Where on her utmoſt verge the ſeas reſound;
Where curs'd Iapetus and Saturn dwell,
Faſt by the brink, within the ſtreams of hell;
No ſun e'er gilds the gloomy horrors there,
No chearful gales refreſh the lazy air;
There arm once more the bold Titanian band;
And arm in vain; for what I will, ſhall ſtand.
Now deep in ocean ſunk the lamp of light,
And drew behind the cloudy veil of night:
The conq'ring Trojans mourn his beams decay'd;
The Greeks rejoicing bleſs the friendly ſhade.
The victors keep the field; and Hector calls
A martial council near the navy walls:

Ver. 590. *Nor ſhall great Hector ceaſe*, &c.] Here, ſays Euſtathius, the poet prepares the reader for what is to ſucceed: he gives us the outlines of his piece, which he is to fill up in the progreſs of the poem. This is ſo far from cloying the reader's appetite, that it raiſes it, and makes him deſirous to ſee the picture drawn in its full length.

Theſe to Scamander's bank apart he led,
Where thinly ſcatter'd lay the heaps of dead.
Th' aſſembled chiefs, deſcending on the ground,
Attend his order, and their prince ſurround.
A maſſy ſpear he bore of mighty ſtrength,
Of full ten cubits was the lance's length;
The point was braſs, refulgent to behold,
Fix'd to the wood with circling rings of gold:
The noble Hector on his lance reclin'd,
And bending forward, thus reveal'd his mind.
Ye valiant Trojans, with attention hear!
Ye Dardan bands, and gen'rous aids give ear!
This day, we hop'd, would wrap in conqu'ring flame
Greece with her ſhips, and crown our toils with fame:
But darkneſs now, to ſave the cowards, falls,
And guards them trembling in their wooden walls.
Obey the night, and uſe her peaceful hours
Our ſteeds to forage, and refreſh our pow'rs.
Strait from the town be ſheep and oxen ſought,
And ſtrength'ning bread, and gen'rous wine be brought.
Wide o'er the field, high blazing to the ſky,
Let num'rous fires the abſent ſun ſupply,
The flaming piles with plenteous fuel raiſe,
Till the bright morn her purple beam diſplays;
Leſt in the ſilence and the ſhades of night,
Greece on her ſable ſhips attempt her flight.
Not unmoleſted let the wretches gain
Their lofty decks, or ſafely cleave the main;
Some hoſtile wound let ev'ry dart beſtow,
Some laſting token of the Phrygian foe,

Ver. 621. *Ye valiant Trojans*, etc.] Euſtathius obſerves that Hector here ſpeaks like a ſoldier: he bears a ſpear, not a ſceptre in his hand; he harangues like a ſoldier, but like a victor, he ſeems to be too much pleaſed with himſelf, and in this vein of ſelf-flattery, he promiſes a compleat conqueſt over the Greeks.

Wounds, that long hence may aſk their ſpouſes care,
And warn their children from a Trojan war.
Now thro' the circuit of our Ilion wall,
Let ſacred heralds ſound the ſolemn call;
To bid the ſires with hoary honours crown'd,
And beardleſs youths our battlements ſurround.
Firm be the guard, while diſtant lie our pow'rs,
And let the matrons hang with lights the tow'rs:
Leſt under covert of the midnight ſhade,
Th' inſidious foe the naked town invade.
Suffice, to night, theſe orders to obey;
A nobler charge ſhall rouze the dawning day.
The Gods, I truſt, ſhall give to Hector's hand,
From theſe deteſted foes to free the land,
Who plow'd, with fates averſe, the wat'ry way;
For Trojan vultures a predeſtin'd prey.
Our common ſafety muſt be now the care;
But ſoon as morning paints the fields of air,
Sheath'd in bright arms let ev'ry troop engage,
And the fir'd fleet behold the battle rage.
Then, then ſhall Hector and Tydides prove,
Whoſe fates are heavieſt in the ſcales of Jove.
To-morrow's light (oh haſte the glorious morn.)
Shall ſee his bloody ſpoils in triumph borne,
With this keen jav'ling ſhall his breaſt be gor'd,
And proſtrate heroes bleed around their lord.
Certain as this, oh! might my days endure,
From age inglorious, and black death ſecure;
So might my life and glory know no bound,
Like Pallas worſhipp'd, like the ſun renown'd!
As the next dawn, the laſt they ſhall enjoy,
Shall cruſh the Greeks, and end the woes of Troy.
The leader ſpoke. From all his hoſt around
Shouts of applauſe along the ſhores reſound.
Each from the yoke the ſmoking ſteeds unty'd,
And fix'd their headſtalls to his chariot-ſide.

Fat ſheep and oxen from the town are led,
With gen'rous wine, and all-ſuſtaining bread.
Full hecatombs lay burning on the ſhore;
The winds to heav'n the curling vapours bore.
Ungrateful off'ring to th' immortal pow'rs!
Whoſe wrath hung heavy o'er the Trojan tow'rs;
Nor Priam nor his ſons obtain'd their grace;
Proud Troy they hated, and her guilty race.
The troops exulting ſat in order round,
And beaming fires illumin'd all the ground.
As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night!
O'er heav'n's clear azure ſpreads her ſacred light,
When not a breath diſturbs the deep ſerene,
And not a cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn ſcene;
Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
And ſtars unnumber'd gild the glowing pole,
O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure ſhed,
And tip with ſilver ev'ry mountain's head;
Then ſhine the vales, the rocks in proſpect riſe,
A flood of glory burſts from all the ſkies:
The conſcious ſwains, rejoicing in the ſight,
Eye the blue vault, and bleſs the uſeful light.
So many flames before proud Ilion blaze,
And lighten glimm'ring Xanthus with their rays:
The long reflection of the diſtant fires
Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the ſpires.

Ver. 679. *Full hecatombs*, &c.] The ſix lines that follow, being a tranſlation of four in the original, are added from the authority of Plato in Mr. Barnes his edition: that author cites them in his ſecond Alcibiades. There is no doubt of their being genuine, but the queſtion is only whether they are rightly placed here? I ſhall not pretend to decide upon a point which will doubtleſs be the ſpeculation of future critics.

Ver. 687. *As when the moon*, &c.] This compariſon is inferior to none in Homer. It is the moſt beautiful night-piece that can be found in poetry. He preſents you with a proſpect of the heavens, the ſeas, and the earth: the ſtars ſhine, the air is ſerene, the world enlightened, and the moon mounted in glory.

A thouſand piles the duſky horrors gild,
And ſhoot a ſhady luſtre o'er the field.
Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend;
Whoſe umber'd arms, by fits, thick flaſhes ſend.
Loud neigh the courſers o'er their heaps of corn,
And ardent warriors wait the riſing morn.

Ver. 703. *A thouſand piles.*] Homer in his catalogue of the Grecian ſhips, though he does not recount expreſsly the number of the Greeks, has given ſome hints from whence the ſum of their army may be collected. But in the ſame book where he gives an account of the Trojan army, and relates the names of the leaders and nations of the auxiliaries, he ſays nothing by which we may infer the number of the army of the beſieged. To ſupply therefore that omiſſion, he has taken occaſion by this piece of poetical arithmetic, to inform his reader, that the Trojan army amounted to 50,000. That the aſſiſtant nations are to be included herein, appears from what Dolon ſays in l. 10. that the auxiliaries were encamped that night with the Trojans.

Ver. 707. *The courſers o'er their heaps of corn.*] I durſt not take the ſame liberty with M. Dacier, who has omitted this circumſtance, and does not mention the horſes at all.

THE

ILIAD.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Embaſſy to Achilles.

AGAMEMNON, after the laſt day's defeat, propoſes to the Greeks to quit the ſiege, and return to their country. Diomed oppoſes this, and Neſtor ſeconds him, praiſing his wiſdom and reſolution. He orders the guard to be ſtrengthened, and a council ſummoned to deliberate what meaſures are to be followed in this emergency. Agamemnon purſues this advice, and Neſtor farther prevails upon him to ſend ambaſſadors to Achilles, in order to move him to a reconciliation. Ulyſſes and Ajax are made choice of, who are accompanied by old Phœnix. They make, each of them, very moving and preſſing ſpeeches, but are rejected with roughneſs by Achilles, who notwithſtanding retains Phœnix in his tent. The ambaſſadors return unſucceſsfully to the camp, and the troops betake themſelves to ſleep.

This book, and the next following, take up the ſpace of one night, which is the twenty-ſeventh from the beginning of the poem. The ſcene lies on the ſea-ſhore, the ſtation of the Grecian ſhips.

THUS joyful Troy maintain'd the watch of night;
While fear, pale comrade of inglorious flight,
And heav'n-bred horror, on the Grecian part,
Sat on each face, and ſadden'd ev'ry heart.
As from its cloudy dungeon iſſuing forth,
A double tempeſt of the weſt and north

Swells

Swells o'er the ſea, from Thracia's frozen ſhore,
Heaps waves on waves, and bids th' Ægean roar;
This way and that, the boiling deeps are toſt;
Such various paſſions urge'd the troubled hoſt.
Great Agamemnon griev'd above the reſt;
Superior ſorrows ſwell'd his royal breaſt;
Himſelf his orders to the heralds bears,
To bid to council all the Grecian peers,
But bid in whiſpers, theſe ſurround their chief,
In ſolemn ſadneſs, and majeſtic grief.

We have here a new ſcene of action opened; the poet has hitherto given us an account of what happened by day only; the two following books relate the adventures of the night.

It may be thought that Homer has crouded a great many actions into a very ſhort time. In the ninth book, a council is convened, an embaſſy ſent, a conſiderable time paſſes in the ſpeeches and replies of the ambaſſadors and Achilles; in the tenth book a ſecond council is called; after this a debate is held, Dolon is intercepted, Diomed and Ulyſſes enter into the enemy's camp, kill Rheſus, and bring away his horſes: and all this is done in the narrow compaſs of one night.

It muſt therefore be remembered, that the ninth book takes up the firſt part of the night only; that after the firſt council was diſſolved, there paſſed ſome time before the ſecond was ſummoned, as appears by the leaders being awakened by Menelaus. So that it was almoſt morning before Diomed and Ulyſſes ſet out upon their deſign, which is very evident from the words of Ulyſſes, Book x. Ver. 251.

Ver. 7. *From Thracia's ſhore.*] Homer has been ſuppoſed by Eratoſthenes and others, to have been guilty of an error, in ſaying that Zephyrus, or the weſt wind, blows from Thrace, whereas in truth it blows toward it. But the poet ſpeaks ſo, either becauſe it is fabled to be the rendezvous of all the winds; or with reſpect to the particular ſituation of Troy and the Ægean ſea. Either of theſe replies are ſufficient to ſolve that objection.

Ver. 15. *But bid in whiſpers.*] The reaſon why Agamemnon commands his heralds to ſummon the leaders in ſilence, is for fear the enemy ſhould diſcover their conſternation, by reaſon of their nearneſs, or perceive what their deſigns were in this extremity. Euſtathius.

The king amidſt the mournful circle roſe;
Down his wan cheek a briny torrent flows;
So ſilent fountains, from a rock's tall head,
In ſable ſtreams ſoft-trickling waters ſhed.
With more than vulgar grief he ſtood oppreſt;
Words, mixt with ſighs, thus burſting from his breaſt.
Ye ſons of Greece! partake your leader's care,
Fellows in arms, and princes of the war!
Of partial Jove too juſtly we complain,
And heav'nly oracles believ'd in vain;
A ſafe return was promis'd to our toils,
With conqueſt honour'd, and enrich'd with ſpoils
Now ſhameful flight alone can ſave the hoſt;
Our wealth, our people, and our glory loſt.
So Jove decrees, Almighty Lord of all!
Jove, at whoſe nod whole empires riſe or fall,
Who ſhakes the feeble props of human truſt,
And tow'rs and armies humbles to the duſt.
Haſte then, for ever quit theſe fatal fields,
Haſte to the joys our native country yields;
Spread all your canvas, all your oars employ,
Nor hope the fall of heav'n-defended Troy.
He ſaid; deep ſilence held the Grecian band,
Silent, unmov'd, in dire diſmay they ſtand,
A penſive ſcene! till Tydeus' warlike ſon
Roll'd on the king his eyes, and thus begun.
When kings adviſe us to renounce our fame,
Firſt let him ſpeak, who firſt has ſuffer'd ſhame.
If I oppoſe thee, prince, thy wrath with-hold,
The laws of council bid my tongue be bold.

Ver. 23. *Agamemnon's ſpeech.*] The critics are divided in their opinion, whether this ſpeech, which is word for word the ſame with that he makes in lib. ii. be only a feint to try the army as it is there, or the real ſentiments of the general. Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus explains it as the former; and Madam Dacier thinks they muſt be both counterfeit, becauſe they are both the ſame, and believes Homer would have otherwiſe varied them.

Thou

Thou firſt, and thou alone, in fields of fight,
Durſt brand my courage, and defame my might:
Nor from a friend th' unkind reproach appear'd,
The Greeks ſtood witneſs, all our army heard.
The Gods, O chief! from whom our honours ſpring,
The Gods have made thee but by halves a king;
They gave thee ſceptres, and a wide command,
They gave dominion o'er the ſeas and land,
The nobleſt pow'r that might the world controul:
They gave thee not——a brave and virtuous ſoul.
Is this a gen'ral's voice, that would ſuggeſt
Fears like his own to ev'ry Grecian breaſt?
Confiding in our want of worth, he ſtands,
And if we fly, 'tis what our king commands.
Go thou inglorious! from th' embattled plain;
Ships thou haſt ſtore, and neareſt to the main,
A nobler care the Grecians ſhall employ,
To combate, conquer, and extirpate Troy.
Here Greece ſhall ſtay; or if all Greece retire,
Myſelf will ſtay, till Troy or I expire;
Myſelf, and Sthenelus, will fight for fame;
God bade us fight, and 'twas with God we came.
He ceas'd; the Greeks loud acclamations raiſe,
And voice to voice reſounds Tydides' praiſe.
Wiſe Neſtor then his rev'rend figure rear'd;
He ſpoke: the hoſt in ſtill attention heard.

Ver. 53. *They gave thee ſceptres*, &c.] This is the language of a brave man, to affirm and ſay boldly, that courage is above ſceptres and crowns. Sceptres and crowns were indeed in former times not hereditary, but the recompence of valour. With what art and haughtineſs Diomed ſets himſelf indirectly above Agamemnon! Euſtathius.

Ver. 62. *And neareſt to the main.*] There is a ſecret ſtroke of ſatire in theſe words; Diomed tells the king that his ſquadron lies next the ſea, inſinuating that they were the moſt diſtant from the battle, and the readieſt for flight. Euſtathius.

O truly great! in whom the Gods have join'd
Such ſtrength of body with ſuch force of mind;
In conduct, as in courage, you excel,
Still firſt to act what you adviſe ſo well.
Thoſe wholeſome counſels which thy wiſdom moves,
Applauding Greece with common voice approves.
Kings thou canſt blame; a bold, but prudent youth;
And blame ev'n kings with praiſe, becauſe with truth.
And yet thoſe years that ſince thy birth have run,
Would hardly ſtyle thee Neſtor's youngeſt ſon.
Then let me add what yet remains behind,
A thought unfiniſh'd in that gen'rous mind;
Age bids me ſpeak; nor ſhall th' advice I bring
Diſtaſte the people, or offend the king:
Curs'd is the man, and void of law and right,
Unworthy property, unworthy light,
Unfit for public rule, or private care;
That wretch, that monſter, who delights in war:
Whoſe luſt is murder, and whoſe horrid joy,
To tear his country, and his kind deſtroy!
This night, refreſh and fortify thy train;
Between the trench and wall let guards remain:

Ver. 73. *O truly great!*] Neſtor could do no leſs than commend Diomed's valour; he had lately been a witneſs of it when he was preſerved from falling into the enemy's hands until he was reſcued by Diomed. Euſtathius.

Ver. 87. *Curs'd is the man.*] Neſtor, ſays the ſame author, very artfully brings in theſe words as a general maxim, in order to diſpoſe Agamemnon to a reconciliation with Achilles: he delivers it in general terms, and leaves the king to make the application.

Ver. 94. *Between the trench and wall.*] It is almoſt impoſſible to make ſuch particularities as theſe appear with any tolerable elegance in poetry: and as they cannot be raiſed, ſo neither muſt they be omitted. This particular ſpace here mentioned beween the trench and wall, is what we muſt carry in our mind thro' this and the following book: otherwiſe we ſhall be at a loſs to know the exact ſcene of the actions and counſels that follow.

Be

Be that the duty of the young and bold;
But thou, O king, to council call the old:
Great is thy ſway, and weighty are the cares;
Thy high commands muſt ſpirit all our wars.
With Thracian wines recruit thy honour'd gueſts,
For happy counſels flow from ſober feaſts.
Wiſe, weighty counſels aid a ſtate diſtreſt,
And ſuch a monarch as can chuſe the beſt.
See! what a blaze from hoſtile tents aſpires,
How near our fleet approach the Trojan fires!
Who can, unmov'd, behold the dreadful light,
What eye beholds 'em, and can cloſe to-night?
This dreadful interval determines all;
To-morrow, Troy muſt flame, or Greece muſt fall.
Thus ſpoke the hoary ſage: the reſt obey;
Swift thro' the gates the guards direct their way.
His ſon was firſt to paſs the lofty mound,
The gen'rous Thraſymed, in arms renown'd:
Next him, Aſcalaphus, Ialmen, ſtood,
The double offspring of the warrior-God.
Deipyrus, Aphareus, Merion, join,
And Lycomed, of Creon's noble line.
Sev'n were the leaders of the nightly bands,
And each bold chief a hundred ſpears commands.
The fires they light, to ſhort repaſts they fall,
Some line the trench, and others man the wall.
The king of men, on public counſels bent,
Conven'd the princes in his ample tent;
Each ſeiz'd a portion of the kingly feaſt,
But ſtaid his hand when thirſt and hunger ceas'd.

Ver. 119. *The fires they light.*] They lighted up theſe fires that they might not ſeem to be under any conſternation, but to be upon their guard againſt any alarm. Euſtathius.

Ver. 124. *When thirſt and hunger ceas'd.*] The conduct of Homer in this place is very remarkable; he does not fall into a long deſcription of the entertainment, but complies with the exigence of affairs, and paſſes on to the conſultation. Euſtathius.

Then

Then Neſtor ſpoke, for wiſdom long approv'd,
And ſlowly riſing, thus the council mov'd.
Monarch of nations! whoſe ſuperior ſway
Aſſembled ſtates, and lords of earth obey,
The laws and ſceptres to thy hand are giv'n,
And millions own the care of thee and Heav'n.
O king! the counſels of my age attend;
With thee my cares begin, in thee muſt end;
Thee, prince! it fits alike to ſpeak and hear,
Pronounce with judgment, with regard give ear,
To ſee no wholeſome motion be withſtood,
And ratify the beſt for public good.
Nor tho' a meaner give advice, repine,
But follow it, and make the wiſdom thine.
Hear then a thought, not now conceiv'd in haſte,
At once my preſent judgment, and my paſt;
When from Pelides' tent you force'd the maid,
I firſt oppos'd, and faithful, durſt diſſuade;

Ver. 138. *And make the wiſdom thine.*] Euſtathius thought that Homer ſaid this, becauſe in council, as in the army, all is attributed to the princes, and the whole honour aſcribed to them: but this is by no means Homer's thought. What he here ſays, is a maxim drawn from the profoundeſt philoſophy. That which often does men the moſt harm, is envy, and the ſhame of yielding to advice, which proceeds from others. There is more greatneſs and capacity in following good advice, than in propoſing it; by executing it, we render it our own, and we raviſh even the property of it from its author; and Euſtathius ſeems to incline to this thought, when he afterwards ſays, Homer makes him that follows good advice, equal to him that gives it: but he has not fully expreſſed himſelf.

Ver. 140. *At once my preſent judgment, and my paſt.*] Neſtor here means the advice he gave at the time of the quarrel, in the firſt book: he ays, as it was his opinion then, that Agamemnon ought not to diſgrace Achilles, ſo after the matureſt deliberation, he finds no reaſon to alter it. Neſtor here launches out into the praiſes of Achilles, which is a ſecret argument to induce Agamemnon to regain his friendſhip, by ſhewing the importance of it.

But

But bold of ſoul, when headlong fury fir'd,
You wrong'd the man, by men and Gods admir'd:
Now ſeek ſome means his fatal wrath to end,
With pray'rs to move him, or with gifts to bend.
To whom the king. With juſtice haſt thou ſhown
A prince's faults, and I with reaſon own.
That happy man whom Jove ſtill honours moſt,
Is more than armies, and himſelf an hoſt.
Bleſt in his love, this wond'rous hero ſtands;
Heav'n fights his war, and humbles all our bands.
Fain would my heart, which err'd thro' frantic rage,
The wrathful chief and angry Gods aſſuage
If gifts immenſe his mighty ſoul can bow,
Hear, all ye Greeks, and witneſs what I vow.
Ten weighty talents of the pureſt gold,
And twice ten vaſes of refulgent mold;

Ver. 151. *This wond'rous hero.*] It is remarkable that Agamemnon here never uſes the name of Achilles: though he reſolved to court his friendſhip, yet he cannot bear the mention of his name. The impreſſion which the diſſention made, is not yet worn off, though he expatiates in commendation of his valour.

Ver. 155. *If gifts immenſe his mighty ſoul can bow.*] The poet, ſays Euſtathius, makes a wiſe choice of the gifts that are to be proffered to Achilles. Had he been ambitious of wealth, there are golden tripods, and ten talents of gold to bribe his reſentment. If he had been addicted to the fair ſex, there was a king's daughter, and ſeven fair captives to win his favour. Or if he had been ambitious of greatneſs, there were ſeven wealthy cities, and a kingly power to court him to a reconciliation: but he takes this way to ſhew us that his anger was ſtronger than all his other paſſions. It is further obſervable, that Agamemnon promiſes theſe preſents at three different times; firſt, at this inſtant; ſecondly, on the taking of Troy; and laſtly, after their return to Greece.

Ver. 157. *Ten weighty talents.*] The ancient critics have blamed one of the verſes in the enumeration of theſe preſents, as not ſufficiently flowing and harmonious, the pauſe is ill placed, and one word does not fall eaſily into the other.

Sev'n

Sev'n ſacred tripods, whoſe unſully'd frame
Yet knows no office, nor has felt the flame:
Twelve ſteeds unmatch'd in fleetneſs and in force,
And ſtill victorious in the duſty courſe:
(Rich were the man whoſe ample ſtores exceed
The prizes purchas'd by their winged ſpeed:)
Sev'n lovely captives of the Leſbian line,
Skill'd in each art, unmatch'd in form divine,
The ſame I choſe for more than vulgar charms,
When Leſbos ſunk beneath the hero's arms.
All theſe, to buy his friendſhip, ſhall be paid,
And join'd with theſe the long-conteſted maid;
With all her charms, Briſeis I reſign,
And ſolemn ſwear thoſe charms were never mine;
Untouch'd ſhe ſtay'd, uninjur'd ſhe removes,
Pure from my arms, and guiltleſs of my loves.
Theſe inſtant ſhall be his; and if the pow'rs
Give to our arms proud Ilion's hoſtile tow'rs,
Then ſhall he ſtore (when Greece the ſpoil divides)
With gold and braſs his loaded navy's ſides.
Beſides full twenty nymphs of Trojan race,
With copious love ſhall crown his warm embrace;
Such as himſelf will chuſe; who yield to none,
Or yield to Helen's heav'nly charms alone.
Yet hear me farther: when our wars are o'er,
If ſafe we land on Argos' fruitful ſhore,
There ſhall he live, my ſon, our honours ſhare,
And with Oreſtes' ſelf divide my care.

Ver. 159. *Seven ſacred tripods.*] There were two kinds of tripods; in the one they uſed to boil water, the other was entirely for ſhew; to mix wine and water in, ſays Athenæos.

Ver. 161. *Twelve ſteeds unmatch'd.*] From hence it is evident that games uſed to be celebrated in the Grecian army during the time of war; perhaps in honour of the deceaſed heroes. For had Agamemnon given Achilles horſes that had been victorious before the beginning of the Trojan war, they would by this time have been too old to be of any value. Euſtathius.

Yet

Yet more——three daughters in my court are bred,
And each well worthy of a royal bed;
Laodice and Iphigenia fair,
And bright Chryſothemis with golden hair;
Her let him chuſe, whom moſt his eyes approve,
I aſk no preſents, no reward for love:
Myſelf will give the dow'r; ſo vaſt a ſtore,
As never father gave a child before.
Sev'n ample cities ſhall confeſs his ſway,
Him Enope, and Phere him obey,
Cordamyle with ample turrets crown'd,
And ſacred Pedaſus for vines renown'd;
Æpea fair, the paſtures Hira yields,
And rich Antheia with her flow'ry fields:
The whole extent to Pylos' ſandy plain,
Along the verdant margin of the main.
There heifers graze, and lab'ring oxen toil;
Bold are the men, and gen'rous is the ſoil;
There ſhall he reign with pow'r and juſtice crown'd,
And rule the tributary realms around.
All this I give, his vengeance to controul,
And ſure all this may move his mighty ſoul.

Ver. 192. *I aſk no preſents.——Myſelf will give the dow'r.*] For in Greece the bridegroom, before he married, was obliged to make two preſents, one to his betrothed wife, and the other to his father-in-law. This cuſtom is very ancient; it was practiſed by the Hebrews in the time of the patriarchs. Abraham's ſervant gave necklaces and ear-rings to Rebecca, whom he demanded for Iſaac, Gen. xxiv. 22. Sechem ſon of Hamor ſays to Jacob and his ſons, whoſe ſiſter he was deſirous to eſpouſe. "Aſk me never "ſo much dowry and gifts," Gen. xxxiv. 12. For the dowry was for the daughter. This preſent ſerved for her dowry, and the other preſents were for the father. In the firſt book of Samuel, xviii. 25. Saul makes them ſay to David, who by reaſon of his poverty, ſaid he could not be ſon-in-law to the king: "The "king deſireth not any dowry." And in the laſt two paſſages, we ſee the preſents were commonly regulated by the father of the bride.

Pluto, the grizly God, who never ſpares,
Who feels no mercy, and who hears no pray'rs,
Lives dark and dreadful in deep hell's abodes,
And mortals hate him, as the worſt of Gods.
Great tho' he be, it fits him to obey;
Since more than his my years, and more my ſway.
The monarch thus: the rev'rend Neſtor then:
Great Agamemnon! glorious king of men!
Such are thy offers as a prince may take,
And ſuch as fits a gen'rous king to make.
Let choſen delegates this hour be ſent,
(Myſelf will name them) to Pelides' tent:
Let Phœnix lead, rever'd for hoary age,
Great Ajax next, and Ithacus the ſage.

Ver. 209. *Pluto, the grizly God, who never ſpares.*] The meaning of this may be gathered from Æſchylus, cited here by Euſtathius. —— "Death is the only God who is not moved by offer-"ings, whom you cannot conquer by ſacrifices and oblations, and "therefore he is the only God to whom no altar is erected, and "no hymns are ſung."

Ver. 221. *Let Phœnix lead.*] How comes it to paſs, that Phœnix is in the Grecian camp, when undoubtedly he retired with his pupil Achilles? Euſtathius ſays, the ancients conjectured that he came to the camp to ſee the firſt battle: and indeed nothing is more natural to imagine, than that Achilles would be impatient to know the event of the day, when he was himſelf abſent from the fight: and as his revenge and glory were to be ſatisfied by the ill ſucceſs of the Grecians, it is highly probable, that he ſent Phœnix to inquire after it.

Ver. 222. *Great Ajax next, and Ithacus the ſage.*] The choice of theſe perſons is made with a great deal of judgment. Achilles could not but reverence the venerable Phœnix his guardian and tutor. Ajax and Ulyſſes had been diſgraced in the firſt book, line 187. as well as he, and were therefore proper perſons to perſuade him to forgive as they had forgiven: beſides, it was the greateſt honour than could be done Achilles, to ſend the moſt worthy perſonages in the army to him. Ulyſſes was inferior to none in eloquence but to Neſtor. Ajax was ſecond to none in valour but to Achilles.

Yet

Yet more to ſanctify the word you ſend,
Let Hodius and Eurybates attend.
Now pray to Jove to grant what Greece demands;
Pray, in deep ſilence, and with pureſt hands.
He ſaid, and all approv'd. The heralds bring
The cleanſing water from the living ſpring.
The youth with wine the ſacred goblets crown'd,
And large libations drench'd the ſands around.
The rite perform'd, the chiefs their thirſt allay,
Then from the royal tent they take their way;
Wiſe Neſtor turns on each his careful eye,
Forbids t' offend, inſtructs them to apply:
Much he adviſ'd them all, Ulyſſes moſt,
To deprecate the chief, and ſave the hoſt.
Thro' the ſtill night they march, and hear the roar
Of murm'ring billows on the ſounding ſhore.
To Neptune, ruler of the ſeas profound,
Whoſe liquid arms the mighty globe ſurround,
They pour forth vows, their embaſſy to bleſs,
And calm the rage of ſtern Æacides.
And now arriv'd, where, on the ſandy bay
The Myrmidonian tents and veſſels lay;
Amus'd at eaſe, the Godlike man they found,
Pleas'd with the ſolemn harp's harmonious ſound.
(The well wrought harp from conquer'd Thebæ came;
Of poliſh'd ſilver was its coſtly frame;)
With this he ſoothes his angry ſoul, and ſings
Th' immortal deeds of heroes and of kings.
Patroclus only of the royal train,
Place'd in his tent, attends the lofty ſtrain.

Ver. 235. *Much he adviſ'd them all, Ulyſſes moſt.*] There is a great propriety in repreſenting Neſtor as ſo particularly applying himſelf on this occaſion to Ulyſſes. Though he of all men had the leaſt need of his inſtructions; yet it is highly natural for one wiſe man to talk moſt to another.

Full oppoſite he ſat, and liſten'd long,
In ſilence waiting till he ceas'd the ſong.
Unſeen the Grecian embaſſy proceeds
To his high tent; the great Ulyſſes leads.
Achilles ſtarting, as the chiefs he ſpy'd,
Leap'd from his ſeat, and laid the harp aſide.
With like ſurprize aroſe Menœtius' ſon:
Pelides graſp'd their hands, and thus begun.
Princes all hail! whatever brought you here,
Or ſtrong neceſſity, or urgent fear;
Welcome, tho' Greeks! for not as foes ye came;
To me more dear than all that bear the name.
With that, the chiefs beneath his roof he led,
And place'd in ſeats with purple carpets ſpread.
Then thus——Patroclus, crown a larger bowl,
Mix purer wine, and open ev'ry ſoul.
Of all the warriors yonder hoſt can ſend,
Thy friend moſt honours theſe, and theſe thy friend.
He ſaid; Patroclus, o'er the blazing fire,
Heaps in a brazen vaſe three chines intire:

The

Ver. 261. *Princes all hail!*] This ſhort ſpeech is wonderfully proper to the occaſion, and to the temper of the ſpeaker. One is under a great expectation of what Achilles will ſay at the ſight of theſe heroes, and I know nothing in nature that could ſatisfy it but the very thing he here accoſts them with.

Ver. 271. *Patroclus o'er the blazing fire.*] Madam Dacier's general note on this paſſage deſerves to be tranſcribed. "Homer," ſays ſhe, is in the right not to avoid theſe deſcriptions, be-
"cauſe nothing can properly be called vulgar which is drawn from
"the manner and uſages of perſons of the firſt dignity; and alſo
"becauſe in his tongue even the terms of cookery are ſo noble,
"and of ſo agreeable a ſound, and he likewiſe knows how to
"place them ſo well, as to extract a perfect harmony from them;
"ſo that he may be ſaid to be as excellent a poet when he de-
"ſcribes theſe ſmall matters, as when he treats of the greateſt
"ſubjects. It is not ſo either with our manners, or our lan-
"guage,

The brazen vaſe Automedon ſuſtains,
Which fleſh of porket, ſheep, and goat, contains:
Achilles at the genial feaſt preſides,
The parts transfixes, and with ſkill divides.
Meanwhile Patroclus ſweats the fire to raiſe;
The tent is brighten'd with the riſing blaze:
Then, when the languid flames at length ſubſide,
He ſtrows a bed of glowing embers wide,
Above the coals the ſmoking fragments turns,
And ſprinkles ſacred ſalt from lifted urns;
With bread the glitt'ring caniſters they load,
Which round the board Menœtius' ſon beſtow'd;
Himſelf, oppos'd t' Ulyſſes full in ſight,
Each portion parts, and orders ev'ry rite.
The firſt fat off'rings, to th' immortals due,
Amidſt the greedy flames Patroclus threw;
Then each, indulging in the ſocial feaſt,
His thirſt and hunger ſoberly repreſt.
That done, to Phœnix Ajax gave the ſign;
Not unperceiv'd; Ulyſſes crown'd with wine

The

"guage. Cookery is left to ſervants, and all its terms ſo low and "diſagreeable, even in the ſound, that nothing can be made of "them, that has not ſome taint of their meanneſs. This great "diſadvantage made me at firſt think of abridging this prepara-"tion of the repaſt; but when I had well conſidered it, I was reſolved to preſerve and give Homer as he is, without retrenching "any thing from the ſimplicity of the heroic manners. I do not "write to enter the liſts againſt Homer, I will diſpute nothing "with him; my deſign is only to give an idea of him, and to "make him underſtood: the reader will therefore forgive me if "this deſcription has none of its original graces."

Ver. 282. *And ſprinkles ſacred ſalt.*] Many reaſons are given why ſalt is called ſacred or divine, but the beſt is becauſe it preſerves things incorrupt, and keeps them from diſſolution.

Ver. 291. *To Phœnix Ajax gave the ſign.*] Ajax, who was a rough ſoldier and no orator, is impatient to have the buſineſs over:

The forming bowl, and inſtant thus began,
His ſpeech addreſſing to the Godlike man.
Health to Achilles! happy are thy gueſts!
Not thoſe more honour'd whom Atrides feaſts:
Tho' gen'rous plenty crown thy loaded boards,
That Agamemnon's regal tent affords;
But greater cares ſit heavy on our ſouls,
Not eas'd by banquets or by flowing bowls.
What ſcenes of ſlaughter in yon fields appear!
The dead we mourn, and for the living fear;
Greece on the brink of fate all doubtful ſtands,
And own no help but from thy ſaving hands:
Troy and her aids for ready vengeance call;
Their threat'ning tents already ſhade our wall:
Hear how with ſhouts their conqueſt they proclaim,
And point at ev'ry ſhip their vengeful flame!
For them the Father of the Gods declares,
Theirs are his omens, and his thunder theirs.
See, full of Jove, avenging Hector riſe!
See! heav'n and earth the raging chief defies;
What fury in his breaſt, what lightning in his eyes!

he makes a ſign to Phœnix to begin, but Ulyſſes prevents him. Perhaps Ulyſſes might flatter himſelf that his oratory would prevail upon Achilles, and ſo obtain the honour of making the reconciliation himſelf: or if he were repulſed, there yet remained a ſecond and a third reſource in Ajax and Phœnix, who might renew the attempt, and endeavour to ſhake his reſolution: there would ſtill be ſome hopes of ſucceſs, as one of theſe was his guardian, the other his relation.

Ver. 296. *Not theſe more honour'd whom Atrides feaſts.*] I muſt juſt mention Dacier's obſervation: with what cunning Ulyſſes here ſlides in the odious name of Agamemnon, as he praiſes Achilles, that the ear of this impetuous man might be familiarized to that name.

He

He waits but for the morn, to ſink in flame
The ſhips, the Greeks, and all the Grecian name.
Heav'ns! how my country's woes diſtract my mind,
Leſt fate accompliſh all his rage deſign'd.
And muſt we, Gods! our heads inglorious lay
In Trojan duſt, and this the fatal day?
Return, Achilles! Oh return, tho' late,
To ſave thy Greeks, and ſtop the courſe of fate;
If in that heart, or grief, or courage lies,
Riſe to redeem; ah yet, to conquer, riſe!
The day may come, when all our warriors ſlain,
That heart ſhall melt, that courage riſe in vain.
Regard in time, O prince divinely brave!
Thoſe wholſome counſels which thy father gave.
When Peleus in his aged arms embrace'd
His parting ſon, theſe accents were his laſt.
My child! with ſtrength, with glory, and ſucceſs,
Thy arms may Juno and Minerva bleſs!
Truſt that to Heav'n: but thou, thy cares engage
To calm thy paſſions, and ſubdue thy rage:
From gentler manners let thy glory grow,
And ſhun contention, the ſure ſource of woe;
That young and old may in thy praiſe combine,
The virtues of humanity be thine——
This, now deſpis'd advice, thy father gave;
Ah! check thy anger, and be truly brave.
If thou wilt yield to great Atrides' pray'rs,
Gifts worthy thee his royal hand prepares;

Ver. 314. *He waits but for the morn, to ſink in flame The ſhips, the Greeks*, etc.] There is a circumſtance in the original which I have omitted, for fear of being too particular in an oration of this warmth and importance; but as it preſerves a piece of antiquity, I muſt not forget it here. He ſays that Hector will not only fire the fleet, but bear off the *ſtatues of the Gods*, which were carved on the prows of the veſſels. Theſe were hung up in the temples, as a monument of victory, according to the cuſtom of thoſe times.

If not——but hear me; while I number o'er
The proffer'd preſents, an exhauſtleſs ſtore.
Ten weighty talents of the pureſt gold,
And twice ten vaſes of refulgent mold;
Sev'n ſacred tripods, whoſe unſully'd frame
Yet knows no office, nor has felt the flame;
Twelve ſteeds unmatch'd in fleetneſs and in force,
And ſtill victorious in the duſty courſe:
(Rich were the man whoſe ample ſtores exceed
The prizes purchas'd by their winged ſpeed,)
Sev'n lovely captives of the Leſbian line,
Skill'd in each art, unmatch'd in form divine;
The fame he choſe for more than vulgar charms,
When Leſbos ſunk beneath thy conq'ring arms.
All theſe, to buy thy friendſhip, ſhall be paid,
And join'd with theſe the long-conteſted maid;
With all her charms, Briſeis he'll reſign,
And ſolemn ſwear thoſe charms were only thine;
Untouch'd ſhe ſtay'd, uninjur'd ſhe removes,
Pure from his arms, and guiltleſs of his loves.
Theſe inſtant ſhall be thine; and if the pow'rs
Give to our arms proud Ilion's hoſtile tow'rs,
Then ſhalt thou ſtore (when Greece the ſpoil divides)
With gold and braſs thy loaded navy's ſides.
Beſides full twenty nymphs of Trojan race,
With copious love ſhall crown thy warm embrace;
Such as thyſelf ſhall chuſe; who yield to none,
Or yield to Helen's heav'nly charms alone.
Yet hear me farther: when our wars are o'er,
If ſafe we land on Argos' fruitful ſhore,
There ſhalt thou live his ſon, his honours ſhare,
And with Oreſtes' ſelf divide his care.
Yet more——three daughters in his court are bred,
And each well worthy of a royal bed;
Laodice and Iphigenia fair,
And bright Chryſothemis with golden hair;

Her

Her ſhalt thou wed whom moſt thy eyes approve;
He aſks no preſents, no reward for love:
Himſelf will give the dow'r; ſo vaſt a ſtore,
As never father gave a child before.
Sev'n ample cities ſhall confeſs thy ſway,
Thee Enope, and Pheræ thee obey,
Cardamyle with ample turrets crown'd,
And ſacred Pedaſus, for vines renown'd:
Æpea fair, the paſtures Hira yields,
And rich Antheia with her flow'ry fields:
The whole extent to Pylos' ſandy plain
Along the verdant margin of the main.
There heifers graze, and lab'ring oxen toil;
Bold are the men, and gen'rous is the ſoil.
There ſhalt thou reign with pow'r and juſtice crown'd,
And rule the tributary realms around.
Such are the proffers which this day we bring,
Such the repentance of a ſuppliant king.
But if all this relentleſs thou diſdain,
If honour, and if int'reſt plead in vain;
Yet ſome redreſs to ſuppliant Greece afford,
And be, amongſt her guardian Gods, ador'd.
If no regard thy ſuff'ring country claim,
Hear thy own glory, and the voice of fame:
For now that chief, whoſe unreſiſted ire
Made nations tremble, and whole hoſts retire,
Proud Hector, now, th' unequal fight demands,
And only triumphs to deſerve thy hands.
Then thus the Goddeſs-born. Ulyſſes, hear
A faithful ſpeech, that knows nor art, nor fear;
What

Ver. 406. *Achilles's ſpeech.*] Nothing is more remarkable than the conduct of Homer in this ſpeech of Achilles. He begins with ſame degree of coolneſs, as in reſpect to the ambaſſador, whoſe perſons he eſteemed, yet even there his temper juſt ſhews itſelf in the inſinuation that Ulyſſes had dealt artfully with him, which he

What in my ſecret ſoul is underſtood,
My tongue ſhall utter, and my deeds make good.
Let Greece then know, my purpoſe I retain,
Nor with new treaties vex my peace in vain.
Who dares think one thing, and another tell,
My heart deteſts him as the gates of hell.
Then thus in ſhort my fixt reſolves attend,
Which nor Atrides, nor his Greeks can bend;
Long toils, long perils in their cauſe I bore,
But now th' unfruitful glories charm no more.
Fight or not fight, a like reward we claim,
The wretch and hero find their prize the ſame;
Alike regretted in the duſt he lies,
Who yields ignobly, or who bravely dies.
Of all my dangers, all my glorious pains,
A life of labours, lo! what fruit remains?
As the bold bird her helpleſs young attends,
From danger guards them, and from want defends;
In ſearch of prey ſhe wings the ſpacious air,
And with th' untaſted food ſupplies her care:
For thankleſs Greece ſuch hardſhips have I brav'd,
Her wives, her infants by my labours ſav'd;
Long ſleepleſs nights in heavy arms I ſtood,
And ſweat laborious days in duſt and blood.

two periods riſes into an open deteſtation of all artifice. He then falls into a ſullen declaration of his reſolves, and a more ſedate repreſentation of his paſt ſervices; but warms as he goes on, and every minute he but names his wrongs, flies out into extravagance. His rage, awakened by that injury, is like a fire blown by a wind that ſinks and riſes by fits, but keeps continually burning, and blazes but the more for thoſe intermiſſions.

Ver. 424. *As the bold bird*, etc] This ſimile (ſays la Motte) muſt be allowed to be juſt, but was not fit to be ſpoken in a paſſion. One may anſwer, that the tenderneſs of the compariſon renders it no way the leſs proper to a man in a paſſion; it being natural enough, the more one is diſguſted at preſent, the more to recollect the kindneſs we have formerly ſhewn to thoſe who are *ungrateful*.

I ſack'd twelve ample cities on the main,
And twelve lay ſmoking on the Trojan plain:
Then at Atrides' haughty feet were laid
The wealth I gather'd, and the ſpoils I made.
Your mighty monarch theſe in peace poſſeſt;
Some few my ſoldiers had, himſelf the reſt.
Some preſent too to ev'ry prince was paid;
And ev'ry prince enjoys the gift he made;
I only muſt refund, of all his train;
See what pre-eminence our merits gain!
My ſpoil alone his greedy ſoul delights;
My ſpouſe alone muſt bleſs his luſtful nights:
The woman, let him (as he may) enjoy;
But what's the quarrel then of Greece to Troy?
What to theſe ſhores th' aſſembled nations draws,
What calls for vengeance, but a woman's cauſe?
Are fair endowments and a beauteous face
Belov'd by none but thoſe of Atreus' race?
The wife whom choice and paſſion both approve,
Sure ev'ry wife and worthy man will love.

Nor

Ver. 450. *The wife whom choice and paſſion both approve, Sure ev'ry wife and worthy man will love.*] The argument of Achilles in this place is very a-propos with reference to the caſe of Agamemnon. If I tranſlated it verbatim, I muſt ſay in plain Engliſh, *Every honeſt man loves his wife.* Thus Homer has made this raſh, this fiery ſoldier governed by his paſſions, and in the rage of youth, bear teſtimony to his own reſpect for the ladies. But it ſeems Poltis king of Thrace was of another opinion, who would have parted with two wives, out of pure good nature to two mere ſtrangers; as I have met with the ſtory ſomewhere in Plutarch. When the Greeks were raiſing forces againſt Troy, they ſent ambaſſadors to this Poltis to deſire his aſſiſtance. He inquired the cauſe of the war, and was told it was the injury Paris had done Menelaus in taking his wife from him. "If that be all, ſaid "the good king, let me accommodate the difference: indeed it "is not juſt the Greek prince ſhould loſe a wife, and on the other "ſide it is pity the Trojan ſhould want one. Now, I have two

"wives,

Nor did my fair-one leſs diſtinction claim;
Slave as ſhe was, my ſoul ador'd the dame.
Wrong'd in my love all proffers I diſdain;
Deceiv'd for once, I truſt not kings again.
Ye have my anſwer—what remains to do,
Your king Ulyſſes, may conſult with you.
What needs he the defence this arm can make?
Has he not walls no human force can ſhake?
Has he not fence'd his guarded navy round,
With piles, with ramparts, and a trench profound?
And will not theſe, (the wonders he has done)
Repel the rage of Priam's ſingle ſon?
There was a time ('twas when for Greece I fought)
When Hector's proweſs no ſuch wonders wrought;
He kept the verge of Troy, nor dar'd to wait
Achilles' fury at the Scæan gate;
He try'd it once, and ſcarce was ſav'd by fate.
But now thoſe ancient enmities are o'er;
To-morrow we the fav'ring Gods implore,
Then ſhall you ſee our parting veſſels crown'd,
And hear with oars the Helleſpont reſound.

" wives, and to prevent all this miſchief, I'll ſend one of them to " Menelaus, and the other to Paris." It is a ſhame this ſtory is ſo little known, and that poor Poltis yet remains uncelebrated: I cannot but recommend him to the modern poets.

Ver. 457. *Your king, Ulyſſes, may conſult with you.*] Achilles ſtill remembers what Agamemnon ſaid to him when they quarrel-ed, *Other brave warriors will be left behind to follow me in battle,* as we have ſeen in the firſt book. He anſwers here without either ſparing Ajax or Ulyſſes; as much his friends as they are, they have their ſhare in this ſtroke of raillery. Euſtathius.

Ver. 459. *Has he not walls?*] This is a bitter ſatire, (ſays Euſtathius) againſt Agamemnon, as if his only deeds were the making of this wall, this ditch, theſe palliſades, to defend himſelf againſt thoſe whom he came to beſiege: there was no need of theſe intrenchments, whilſt Achilles fought.

The

The third day hence ſhall Pthia greet our ſails,
If mighty Neptune ſend propitious gales;
Pthia to her Achilles ſhall reſtore
The wealth he left for this deteſted ſhore:
Thither the ſpoils of this long war ſhall paſs,
The ruddy gold, the ſteel, and ſhining braſs;
My beauteous captives thither I'll convey,
And all that reſts of my unraviſh'd prey.
One only valu'd gift your tyrant gave,
And that reſum'd; the fair Lyrnaſſian ſlave.
Then tell him; loud, that all the Greeks may hear,
And learn to ſcorn the wretch they baſely fear;
(For arm'd in impudence, mankind he braves,
And meditates new cheats on all his ſlaves;
Tho' ſhameleſs as he is, to face theſe eyes
Is what he dares not; if he dares, he dies)
Tell him, all terms, all commerce I decline,
Nor ſhare his council, nor his battle join:
For once deceiv'd, was his; but twice, were mine.
No—let the ſtupid prince, whom Jove deprives
Of ſenſe and juſtice, run where frenzy drives;
His gifts are hateful: kings of ſuch a kind
Stand but as ſlaves before a noble mind.
Not tho' he proffer'd all himſelf poſſeſt,
And all his rapine could from others wreſt;
Not all the golden tides of wealth that crown
The many peopled Orchomenian town;

Ver. 481. *One only valu'd gift your tyrant gave.*] The injury which Agamemnon offered to Achilles is ſtill uppermoſt in his thoughts; he has but juſt diſmiſſed it, and now returns to it again. Theſe repetitions are far from being faults in Achilles's wrath, whoſe anger is perpetually breaking out upon the ſame injury.

Not all proud Thebes' unrival'd walls contain,
The world's great empreſs on th' Ægyptian plain,
(That ſpreads her conqueſts o'er a thouſand ſtates,
And pours her heroes thro' a hundred gates,
Two hundred horſemen, and two hundred cars
From each wide portal iſſuing to the wars)
Tho' bribes were heap'd on bribes, in number more
Than duſt in fields, or ſands along the ſhore;
Should all theſe offers for my friendſhip call;
'Tis he that offers, and I ſcorn them all.
Atrides' daughter never ſhall be led
(An ill-match'd conſort) to Achilles' bed;
Like golden Venus tho' ſhe charm'd the heart,
And vy'd with Pallas in the works of art.
Some greater Greek let thoſe high nuptials grace,
I hate alliance with a tyrant's race.
If Heav'n reſtore me to my realms with life,
The rev'rend Peleus ſhall elect my wife;
Theſſalian nymphs there are, of form divine,
And kings that ſue to mix their blood with mine.

Ver. 500. *Not all proud Thebes,* etc.] Theſe ſeveral circumſtances concerning Thebes are thought by ſome not to ſuit with that emotion with which Achilles here is ſuppoſed to ſpeak: but the contrary will appear true, if we reflect that nothing is more uſual for perſons tranſported with anger, than to inſiſt, and return to ſuch particulars as moſt touch them; and that exaggeration is a figure extremely natural in paſſion. Achilles therefore, by ſhewing the greatneſs of Thebes, its wealth, and extent, does in effect but ſhew the greatneſs of his own ſoul, and of that inſuperable reſentment which renders all theſe riches (though the greateſt in the world) contemptible in his ſight, when he compares them with the indignity his honour has received.

Ver. 500. *Proud Thebes' unrival'd walls,* &c.] "The city which "the Greeks call Thebes, the Ægyptians Dioſpolis (ſays Diodo- "rus, lib. 1. par. 2.) was in circuit a hundred and forty *ſtadia,* "adorned with ſtately buildings, magnificent temples, and rich "donations. It was not only the moſt beautiful and noble city of "Ægypt, but of the whole world."

Bleſt

Bleſt in kind love, my years ſhall glide away,
Content with juſt hereditary ſway;
There deaf for ever to the martial ſtrife,
Enjoy the dear prerogative of life.
Life is not to be bought with heaps of gold;
Not all Apollo's Pythian treaſures hold,
Or Troy once held, in peace and pride of ſway,
Can bribe the poor poſſeſſion of a day!
Loſt herds and treaſures, we by arms regain,
And ſteeds unrival'd on the duſty plain:
But from our lips the vital ſpirit fled,
Returns no more to wake the ſilent dead.
My fates long ſince by Thetis were diſclos'd,
And each alternate, life or fame propos'd;
Here, if I ſtay, before the Trojan town,
Short is my date, but deathleſs my renown:
If I return, I quit immortal praiſe
For years on years, and long-extended days.
Convince'd, tho' late, I find my fond miſtake,
And warn the Greeks the wiſer choice to make:

Ver. 525. *Not all Apollo's Pythian treaſures.*] The temple of Apollo at Delphos was the richeſt temple in the world, by the offerings which were brought to it from all parts; there were ſtatues of maſſy gold of a human ſize, figures of animals in gold, and ſeveral other treaſures. A great ſign of its wealth is, that the Phocians pillaged it in the time of Philip the ſon of Amyntas, which gave occaſion to the holy war. It is ſaid to have been pillaged before, and that the great riches of which Homer ſpeaks, had been carried away. Euſtathius.

Ver. 530. *The vital ſpirit fled, Returns no more.*] Nothing ſure could be better imagined, or more ſtrongly paint Achilles's reſentment, than this commendation which Homer puts into his mouth of a long and peaceable life. That hero, whoſe very ſoul was poſſeſſed with love of glory, and who preferred it to life itſelf, lets his anger prevail over this his darling paſſion: he deſpiſes even glory, when he cannot obtain that, and enjoy his revenge at the ſame time; and rather than lay this aſide, becomes the very *reverſe of himſelf*,

To quit theſe ſhores, their native ſeats enjoy,
Nor hope the fall of heav'n-defended Troy.
Jove's arm diſplay'd aſſerts her from the ſkies;
Her hearts are ſtrengthen'd, and her glories riſe.
Go then, to Greece report our fixt deſign;
Bid all your counſels, all your armies join,
Let all your forces, all your arts conſpire,
To ſave the ſhips, the troops, the chiefs from fire.
One ſtratagem has fail'd, and others will:
Ye find, Achilles is unconquer'd ſtill.
Go then—digeſt my meſſage as ye may—
But here this night let rev'rend Phœnix ſtay:
His tedious toils, and hoary hairs demand
A peaceful death in Pthia's friendly land.
But whether he remain, or ſail with me,
His age be ſacred, and his will be free.
The ſon of Peleus ceas'd: the chiefs around
In ſilence wrapt, in conſternation drown'd,
Attend the ſtern reply. Then Phœnix roſe;
(Down his white beard a ſtream of ſorrow flows)
And while the fate of ſuff'ring Greece he mourn'd,
With accent weak theſe tender words return'd.
Divine Achilles! wilt thou then retire,
And leave our hoſts in blood, our fleets on fire!
If wrath ſo dreadful fill thy ruthleſs mind,
How ſhall thy friend, thy Phœnix, ſtay behind?

Ver. 565. *How ſhall thy friend, thy Phœnix, ſtay behind.*] This is a ſtrong argument to perſuade Achilles to ſtay, but dreſſed up in the utmoſt tenderneſs: the venerable old man riſes with tears in his eyes, and ſpeaks the language of affection. He tells him that he would not be left behind him, though the Gods would free him from the burden of old age, and reſtore him to his youth: but in the midſt of ſo much fondneſs, he couches a powerful argument to perſuade him not to return home, by adding, that his father ſent him to be his guide and guardian; Phœnix ought not therefore to follow the inclinations of Achilles, but Achilles the directions of Phœnix.

The

The royal Peleus, when from Pthia's coaſt
He ſent thee early to th' Achaian hoſt
Thy youth as then in ſage debates unſkill'd,
And new to perils of the direful field:
He bade me teach thee all the ways of war;
To ſhine in councils, and in camps to dare.
Never, ah never let me leave thy ſide!
No time ſhall part us, and no fate divide.
Not tho' the God, that breath'd my life, reſtore
The bloom I boaſted, and the port I bore,
When Greece of old beheld my youthful flames,
(Deſightful Greece, the land of lovely dames.)
My father, faithleſs to my mother's arms,
Old as he was, ador'd a ſtranger's charms.
I try'd what youth could do (at her deſire)
To win the damſel, and prevent my ſire.
My ſire with curſes loads my hated head,
And cries, "Ye furies! barren be his bed."
Infernal Jove, the vengeful fiends below,
And ruthleſs Proſerpine, confirm'd his vow.
Deſpair and grief diſtract my lab'ring mind;
Gods! what a crime my impious heart deſign'd?
I thought (but ſome kind God that thought ſuppreſt)
To plunge the poniard in my father's breaſt:
Then meditate my flight; my friends in vain
With pray'rs intreat me, and with force detain;

Ver. 586. *Deſpair and grief diſtract,* etc.] I have taken the liberty to replace here four verſes which Ariſtarchus had cut out, becauſe of the horror which the idea gave him of a ſon who is going to kill his father; but perhaps Ariſtarchus's niceneſs was too great. Theſe verſes ſeem to me neceſſary, and have a very good effect; for Phœnix's aim is to ſhew Achilles, that unleſs we overcome our wrath, we are expoſed to commit the greateſt crimes: he was going to kill his own father. Achilles in the ſame manner is going to let his father Phœnix and all the Greeks periſh, if he does not appeaſe his wrath.

On fat of rams, black bulls, and brawny ſwine,
They daily feaſt, with draughts of fragrant wine:
Strong guards they place'd, and watch'd nine nights intire;
The roofs and porches flam'd with conſtant fire.
The tenth, I force'd the gates, unſeen of all;
And favour'd by the night, o'erleap'd the wall.
My travels thence thro' ſpacious Greece extend;
In Pthia's court at laſt my labours end.
Your ſire receiv'd me, as his ſon careſs'd,
With gifts enrich'd, and with poſſeſſions bleſs'd.
The ſtrong Dolopians thenceforth own'd my reign,
And all the coaſt that runs along the main.
By love to thee his bounties I repaid,
And early wiſdom to thy ſoul convey'd:
Great as thou art, my leſſons made thee brave,
A child I took thee, but a hero gave.
Thy infant breaſt a like affection ſhow'd;
Still in my arms, (an ever-pleaſing load)
Or at my knee, by Phœnix wouldſt thou ſtand;
No food was grateful but from Phœnix' hand.
I paſs my watchings o'er thy helpleſs years,
The tender labours, the compliant cares;
The Gods (I thought) revers'd their hard decree,
And Phœnix felt a father's joys in thee:
Thy growing virtues juſtify'd my cares,
And promis'd comfort to my ſilver hairs.

Ver. 612. *I paſs my watchings o'er thy helpleſs years.*] In the original of this place Phœnix tells Achilles, that as he placed him in his infancy on his lap, *he has often caſt up the wine he had drank upon his cloaths.* I wiſh I had any authority to ſay theſe verſes were foiſted into the text: for though the idea be indeed natural, it muſt be granted to be ſo very groſs, as to be utterly unworthy of Homer; nor do I ſee any colour to ſoften the meanneſs of it; ſuch images in any age or country, muſt have been too nauſeous to be deſcribed.

Now

Now be thy rage, thy fatal rage, reſign'd;
A cruel heart ill ſuits a manly mind:
The Gods (the only great, and only wiſe)
Are mov'd by off'rings, vows, and ſacrifice;
Offending man their high compaſſion wins,
And daily pray'rs atone for daily ſins.
Pray'rs are Jove's daughters, of celeſtial race,
Lame are their feet, and wrinkled is their face:
With humble mien, and with dejected eyes,
Conſtant they follow, where Injuſtice flies:
Injuſtice ſwift, erect, and unconfin'd,
Sweeps the wide earth, and tramples o'er mankind,
While Pray'rs, to heal her wrongs, move ſlow behind.
Who hears theſe daughters of Almighty Jove,
For him they mediate to the throne above:
When man rejects the humble ſuit they make,
The Sire revenges for the daughters ſake;
From Jove commiſſion'd, fierce Injuſtice then
Deſcends, to puniſh unrelenting men.
Oh let not headlong paſſion bear the ſway;
Theſe reconciling Goddeſſes obey:
Due honours to the ſeed of Jove belong;
Due honours calm the fierce and bend the ſtrong.
Were theſe not paid thee by the terms we bring,
Were rage ſtill harbour'd in the haughty king,
Nor Greece, nor all her fortunes ſhould engage
Thy friend to plead againſt ſo juſt a rage.
But ſince what honour aſks, the gen'ral ſends,
And ſends by thoſe whom moſt thy heart commends,
The beſt and nobleſt of the Grecian train;
Permit not theſe to ſue, and ſue in vain!

Let

Let me (my ſon) an ancient fact unfold,
A great example drawn from times of old;
Hear what our fathers were, and what their praiſe,
Who conquer'd their revenge in former days.
Where Calydon on rocky mountains ſtands,
Once fought th' Ætolian and Curetian bands;
To guard it thoſe, to conquer, theſe advance;
And mutual deaths were dealt with mutual chance.
The ſilver Cynthia bade contention riſe,
In vengeance of neglected ſacrifice;
On Oeneus' fields ſhe ſent a monſtrous boar,
That levell'd harveſts, and whole foreſts tore:
This beaſt, (when many a chief his tuſks had ſlain)
Great Meleager ſtretch'd along the plain.
Then, for his ſpoils, a new debate aroſe,
The neighbour nations thence commencing foes.
Strong as they were, the bold Curetes fail'd,
While Meleager's thund'ring arm prevail'd:
Till rage at length inflam'd his lofty breaſt,
(For rage invades the wiſeſt and the beſt.)
Curs'd by Althæa, to his wrath he yields,
And in his wife's embrace forgets the fields.

Ver. 649. *Let me, my ſon, an ancient fact unfold.*] Phœnix, ſays Euſtathius, lays down, as the foundation of his ſtory, that great men in former ages were always appeaſed by preſents and intreaties; and to confirm this poſition, he brings Meleager as an inſtance; but it may be objected, that Meleager was on ill choſen inſtance, being a perſon whom no intreaties could move. The ſuperſtructure of this ſtory ſeems not to agree with the foundation. Euſtathius ſolves the difficulty thus. Homer did not intend to give an inſtance of a hero's compliance with the intreaties of his friends, but to ſhew that they who did not comply, were ſufferers themſelves in the end. So that the connection of the ſtory is thus: the heroes of former times were uſed always to be won by preſents and intreaties; Meleager only was obſtinate, and ſuffered becauſe he was ſo.

" (She from Marpeſſa ſprung, divinely fair,
" And matchleſs Idas, more than man in war;
" The God of day ador'd the mother's charms;
" Againſt the God the father bent his arms;
" Th' afflicted pair, their ſorrows to proclaim,
" From Cleopatra chang'd this daughter's name,
" And call'd Alcyone; a name to ſhow
" The father's grief, the mourning mother's woe.")
To her the chief retir'd from ſtern debate,
But found no peace from fierce Althæa's hate:
Althæa's hate th' unhappy warrior drew,
Whoſe luckleſs hand his royal uncle ſlew;
She beat the ground, and call'd the pow'rs beneath
On her own ſon to wreak her brother's death:
Hell heard her curſes from the realms profound,
And the red fiends that walk the nightly round.
In vain Ætolia her deliv'rer waits,
War ſhakes her walls, and thunders at her gates.
She ſent ambaſſadors, a choſen band,
Prieſts of the Gods, and elders of the land;
Beſought the chief to ſave the ſinking ſtate:
Their pray'rs were urgent, and their proffers great:
(Full fifty acres of the richeſt ground,
Half paſture green, and half with vineyards crown'd.)
His ſuppliant father, aged Oeneus, came;
His ſiſters follow'd; ev'n the vengeful dame,
Althæa ſues; his friends before him fall:
He ſtands relentleſs, and rejects 'em all:
Meanwhile the victor's ſhouts aſcend the ſkies;
The walls are ſcal'd; the rolling flames ariſe;
At length his wife (a form divine) appears,
With piercing cries, and ſupplicating tears;

Stern

She paints the horrors of a conquer'd town,
The heroes ſlain, the palaces o'erthrown;
The matrons raviſh'd, the whole race enſlav'd:
The warrior heard, he vanquiſh'd, and he ſav'd.
Th' Ætolians, long diſdain'd, now took their turn,
And left the chief their broken faith to mourn.
Learn hence, betimes to curb pernicious ire,
Nor ſtay, till yonder fleets aſcend in fire:
Accept the preſents; draw thy conq'ring ſword;
And be amongſt our guardian Gods ador'd.
Thus he: The ſtern Achilles thus reply'd.
My ſecond father, and my rev'rend guide:
Thy friend, believe me, no ſuch gifts demands,
And aſks no honours from a mortal's hands:
Jove honours me, and favours my deſigns;
His pleaſure guides me, and his will confines:

Ver. 703. *She paints the horrors of a conquer'd town;*
The heroes ſlain, the palaces o'erthrown,
The matrons raviſh'd, the whole race enſlav'd.]
It is remarkable with what art Homer here in a few words ſums up the miſeries of a city taken by aſſault.

It had been unpardonable in Cleopatra to have made a long repreſentation to Meleager of theſe miſeries, when every moment that kept him from the battle could not be ſpared. It is alſo to be obſerved, how perfectly the features of Meleager reſemble Achilles's; they are both brave men, ambitious of glory, both of them deſcribed as giving victory to their ſeveral armies while they fought, and both of them implacable in their reſentment.

Ver. 713. *Achilles's anſwer to Phœnix.*] The character of Achilles is excellently ſuſtained in all his ſpeeches: to Ulyſſes he returns a flat denial, and threatens to leave the Trojan ſhores in the morning: to Phœnix he gives a much gentler anſwer, and begins to mention Agamemnon with leſs diſreſpect. After Ajax had ſpoken, he ſeems determined not to depart, but yet refuſes to bear arms, until it is to defend his own ſquadron. Thus Achilles's character is every where of a piece: he begins to yield, and not to have done ſo, would not have ſpoke him a man; to have made him perfectly inexorable, had ſhewn a monſter.

And

And here I ſtay, (if ſuch his high beheſt)
While life's warm ſpirit beats within my breaſt.
Yet hear one word, and lodge it in thy heart;
No more moleſt me on Atrides' part:
Is it for him theſe tears are taught to flow,
For him theſe ſorrows? for my mortal foe?
A gen'rous friendſhip no cold medium knows,
Burns with one love, with one reſentment glows;
One ſhould our int'reſts, and our paſſions be;
My friend muſt hate the man that injures me.
Do this, my Phœnix, 'tis a gen'rous part,
And ſhare my realms, my honours, and my heart.
Let theſe return: our voyage, or our ſtay,
Reſt undetermin'd till the dawning day.
He ceas'd; then order'd for the ſage's bed
A warmer couch with num'rous carpets ſpread,
With that, ſtern Ajax his long ſilence broke,
And thus, impatient, to Ulyſſes ſpoke.
Hence let us go—why waſte we time in vain?
See what effect our low ſubmiſſions gain!
Lik'd or not lik'd, his words we muſt relate,
The Greeks expect them, and our heroes wait.
Proud as he is, that iron-heart retains
Its ſtubborn purpoſe, and his friends diſdains.

Ver. 720. *While life's warm ſpirit beats within my breaſt.*] Euſtathius obſerves here with a great deal of penetration, that theſe words of Achilles include a ſort of oracle, which he does not underſtand: for it ſometimes happens, that men full of their objects ſay things, which, beſides the ſenſe natural and plain to every body, include another ſupernatural, which they themſelves do not underſtand, and which is underſtood by thoſe only who have penetration enough to ſee through the obſcurity of it.

Ver. 737. *The ſpeech of Ajax.*] I have before ſpoken of this ſhort ſoldier-like ſpeech of Ajax: Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus ſays of it, "That the perſon who intreats moſt, and with moſt "liberty, who ſupplicates moſt, and preſſes moſt, is Ajax." It is probable that Ajax riſes up when he ſpeaks the word, *Let us go.* He does not vouchſafe to addreſs himſelf to Achilles, but turns himſelf to Ulyſſes, and ſpeaks with a martial eloquence.

Su

Stern, and unpitying! if a brother bleed,
One juſt atonement, we remit the deed;
A ſire the ſlaughter of his ſon forgives;
The price of blood diſcharg'd, the murd'rer lives:
The haughtieſt hearts at length their rage reſign,
And gifts can conquer ev'ry ſoul but thine.
The Gods that unrelenting breaſt have ſteel'd,
And curs'd thee with a mind that cannot yield.
One woman ſlave was raviſh'd from thy arms:
Lo, ſev'n are offer'd, and of equal charms.
Then hear, Achilles! be of better mind;
Revere thy roof, and to thy gueſts be kind;
And know the men, of all the Grecian hoſt,
Who honour worth, and prize thy valour moſt.
O ſoul of battles, and thy people's guide!
(To Ajax thus the firſt of Greeks reply'd)
Well haſt thou ſpoke; but at the tyrant's name
My rage rekindles, and my ſoul's on flame:
'Tis juſt reſentment, and becomes the brave;
Diſgrace'd, diſhonour'd, like the vileſt ſlave!

Ver. 746. *The price of blood diſcharg'd.*] It was the cuſtom for the murderer to go into baniſhment one year; but if the relations of the perſon murdered were willing, the criminal, by paying them a certain fine, might buy off the exile, and remain at home. Ajax ſums up this argument with a great deal of ſtrength: we ſee, ſays he, a brother forgive the murder of his brother, a father that of his ſon: but Achilles will not forgive the injury offered him by taking away one captive woman.

Ver. 759. *Well haſt thou ſpoke; but at the tyrant's name—My rage rekindles.*] We have here the true picture of an angry man: nothing can be better imagined to heighten Achilles's wrath; he owns that reaſon will induce him to a reconciliation, but his anger is too great to liſten to reaſon. He ſpeaks with reſpect to them, but upon mentioning Agamemnon, he flies into rage: anger is in nothing more like madneſs, than that madmen will talk ſenſibly enough upon any indifferent matter; but upon the mention of the ſubject that cauſed their diſorder, they fly out into their uſual extravagance.

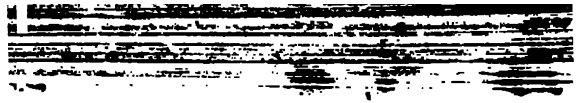
Return

Return then, heroes! and our anſwer bear,
The glorious combat is no more my care;
Not till amidſt yon ſinking navy ſlain,
The blood of Greeks ſhall dye the ſable main;
Not till the flames, by Hector's fury thrown,
Conſume your veſſels, and approach my own;
Juſt there, th' impetuous homicide ſhall ſtand,
There ceaſe his battle, and there feel our hand.

This ſaid, each prince a double goblet crown'd,
And caſt a large libation on the ground;
Then to their veſſels, thro' the gloomy ſhades,
The chiefs return; divine Ulyſſes leads.
Meantime Achilles' ſlaves prepar'd a bed,
With fleeces, carpets, and ſoft linen ſpread:
There, till the ſacred morn reſtor'd the day,
In ſlumbers ſweet the rev'rend Phœnix lay.
But in his inner tent, an ampler ſpace,
Achilles ſlept; and in his warm embrace
Fair Diomedé of the Leſbian race.
Laſt, for Patroclus was the couch prepar'd,
Whoſe nightly joys the beauteous Iphis ſhar'd:
Achilles to his friend conſign'd her charms,
When Scyros fell before his conqu'ring arms.
And now th' elected chiefs, whom Greece had ſent,
Paſs'd thro' the hoſts, and reach'd the royal tent.
Then riſing all, with goblets in their hands,
The peers, and leaders of th' Achaian bands
Hail'd their return: Atrides firſt begun.
Say what ſucceſs? divine Laertes' ſon!
Achilles' high reſolves declare to all;
Returns the chief, or muſt our navy fall?
Great king of nations! (Ithacus reply'd)
Fix'd is his wrath, unconquer'd is his pride;
He ſlights thy friendſhip, thy propoſals ſcorns,
And thus implor'd, with fiercer fury burns.
To ſave our army, and our fleets to free,
Is not his care; but left to Greece and thee.

Your eyes ſhall view, when morning paints the ſky,
Beneath his oars the whitening billows fly,
Us too he bids our oars and ſails employ,
Nor hope the fall of heav'n-protected Troy;
For Jove o'erſhades her with his arm divine,
Inſpires her war, and bids her glory ſhine.
Such was his word: what farther he declar'd,
Theſe ſacred heralds and great Ajax heard.
But Phœnix in his tent the chief retains.
Safe to tranſport him to his native plains,
When morning dawns: if other he decree,
His age is ſacred, and his choice is free.
Ulyſſes ceas'd: the great Achaian hoſt,
With ſorrow ſeiz'd, in conſternation loſt,
Attend the ſtern reply. Tydides broke
The gen'ral ſilence, and undaunted ſpoke,
Why ſhould we gifts to proud Achilles ſend?
Or ſtrive with pray'rs his haughty ſoul to bend?
His country's woes he glories to deride,
And pray'rs will burſt that ſwelling heart with pride.
Be the fierce impulſe of his rage obey'd;
Our battles let him, or deſert, or aid;
Then let him arm when Jove or he think fit;
That, to his madneſs, or to heav'n commit:
What for ourſelves we can, is always ours;
This night, let due repaſt refreſh our pow'rs;
(For ſtrength conſiſts in ſpirits and in blood,
And thoſe are ow'd to gen'rous wine and food)
But when the roſy meſſenger of day
Strikes the blue mountains with her golden ray,
Range'd at the ſhips, let all our ſquadrons ſhine,
In flaming arms, a long-extended line:
In the dread front let great Atrides ſtand,
The firſt in danger, as in high command.
Shouts of acclaim the liſt'ning heroes raiſe,
Then each to Heav'n the due libations pays;
Till ſleep deſcending o'er the tents, beſtows
The grateful bleſſings of deſir'd repoſe.

End of VOL. I.



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